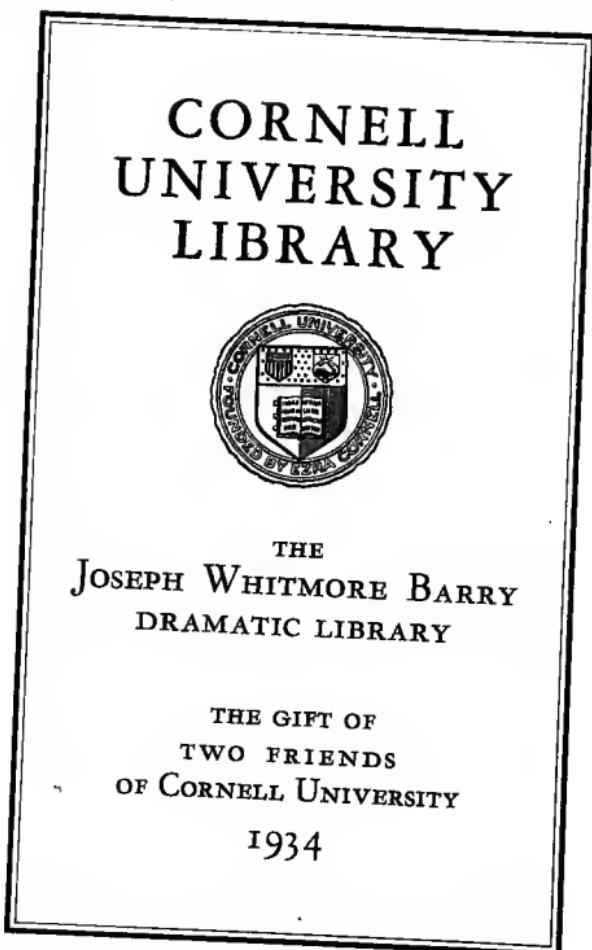
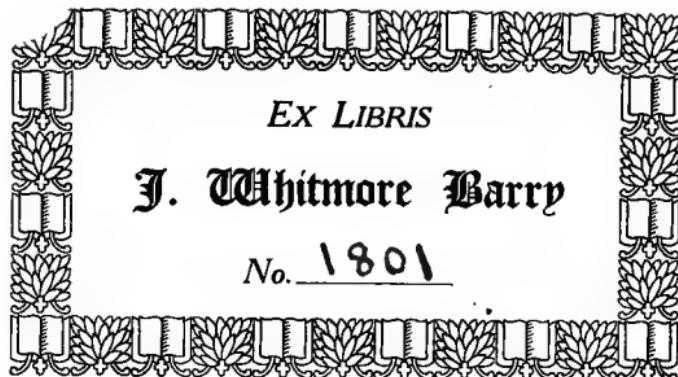


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The dreamers; a play in three acts, by Len



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THE DREAMERS

Maurice de THE DREAMERS *Dublin*

A play in Three Acts by LENNOX ROBINSON.

Cr. 8vo. Boards, Linen Back, 2s. net.

A new Abbey Theatre Play by the Author of "The Clancy Name," "Harvest," "Patriots," &c. This play deals with the Irish leader, Robert Emmet and his insurrection, and a strong contrast is brought out between Emmet and some of his followers. The period is treated from a somewhat similar point of view as in "Patriots."

"The play. . . . has all the merits we expect from the Abbey Theatre School—admirable characterisation achieved by an economy of means, pithy dialogues, sympathy, detachment, restraint, and an entire absence of sentimality."—*Morning Post*,

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

TWO PLAYS "Harvest," and "The
Clancy Name."

"PATRIOTS." A Play in three Acts.

THE DREAMERS
A PLAY IN THREE ACTS
BY LENNOX ROBINSON

MAUNSEL & COMPANY, LTD.
LONDON AND DUBLIN

1915

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T_θ

W. B. YEATS

Vanquish'd in life, his death
By beauty made amends :
The passing of his breath
Won his defeated ends.

Brief life and hapless ? Nay :
Through death, life grew sublime.
Speak after sentence ? Yea ;
And to the end of time.

LIONEL JOHNSON.

There is fact in this play and there is fancy, and only the student of those dreaming days will know where the one merges with the other. He is scarcely likely to approve of this attempt to recapture the emotion of an historical episode by means that are very often unhistorical ; to his trained mind any study of Robert Emmet's insurrection which ignores Owen Kirwan, Anne Devlin and many another is unworthy of serious consideration. But selection and rejection of incidents and characters is the beginning and end of all playmaking ; even in plays dealing with imaginary people there must always remain the country on the dark side of the moon unknown to the audience but as vivid to the playwright as the side that shines on the stage, how much more crowded must that dark side be in an historical play when into a few acts must be crushed the emotions and actions of hundreds of people during several months ? That is the only defence I can offer to his just criticism on the omissions in the play.

He will also, probably, quarrel with the title of the play and say that Robert Emmet was practical in all his qualities, a soldier, a tactician, a most able organiser. I agree. But all these things were fused together for one purpose by the most practical quality of all—his dream. Dreams are the only permanent things in life, the only heritage that can be boarded or spent and yet handed down intact from generation to generation. Robert Emmet's dream came down to him through—how many ?—generations. He passed it on undimmed. It is being dreamed to-day, as vivid as ever and—they say—as unpractical.

LENNOX ROBINSON.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*The Brady's house at Rathfarnham. 16th July, 1803.*

ACT II.

SCENE 1.—*Room in the White Bull Inn, Thomas Street. Morning. 23rd July, 1803.*

SCENE 2.—*Marshalsea Lane. Evening. 23rd July, 1803.*

SCENE 3.—*The same room as in Scene 1. Evening. 23rd July, 1803.*

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Mrs. Palmer's house at Harold's Cross. 25th August, 1803.*

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY IN THE ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE.

| | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| JOHN BRADY. | CON. |
| ROBERT BRADY. | MICKEY. |
| MARTIN BRADY. | 1ST MAN. |
| ROBERT EMMET. | 2ND MAN. |
| LACEY. | KATE. |
| SARAH CURRAN. | MARY. |
| HENRY HOWLEY. | QUIGLEY. |
| THOMAS FREYNE. | PHILIPS. |
| McCARTNEY. | A SHRILL VOICE. |
| HANNAY. | A SMALL CLEAR VOICE. |
| MORRISSEY. | A MEAN-LOOKING MAN. |
| TRENAGHAN. | MANGAN. |
| PETER FREYNE. | JIMMY. |
| ROCHE. | MRS. DILLON. |
| MULLIGAN. | MIKE. |
| JULIA. | MRS. PALMER. |
| JERRY. | ELLEN PALMER. |
| JIM. | MAJOR SIRR. |
| PETER FLYNN. | JONES. |
| FELIX ROURKE. | FOUR OTHER SOLDIERS. |
| A MAN. | OTHER MEN. VOICES. |
| LARRY. | |

THE DREAMERS

ACT I.

SCENE.—*In a room furnished partly as a bootmaker's shop, partly as a living room, three men are working. They are brothers, but strongly contrasted in appearance and age. JOHN BRADY, the eldest, is thirty-three years old, but his hair is already grey and he looks to be at least ten years older. He is a little stern in manner, a little harsh in speech. ROBERT, the second brother, is ten years younger, a mild-spoken reserved man, and MARTIN, the youngest, has all the fire and impetuosity of a boy of eighteen. Their speech has a slight accent of the North, most noticeable in JOHN's speech, least in MARTIN's. There is a door and a window in the back wall, and as the house is near Rathfarnham, perhaps through the window you get a glimpse of the Dublin hills. But though it is only seven o'clock on the evening of 16th July, 1803, it is strangely dark, and every moment the sky outside grows darker. MARTIN is whistling as he works. JOHN makes an inaudible remark.*

ROBERT. For goodness sake, Martin, quit your whistling. I can't hear a thing.

MARTIN. (*amiably enough*). I'm sorry, Bob.

ROBERT. Did you speak, John?

JOHN. I was only saying it was getting so dark I could hardly see to work.

ROBERT. Ay, that it is. It must be a long way from sundown, and yet it's as dark as a November evening.

The Dreamers

MARTIN. I believe there's thunder coming. You'd know it by the sort of stillness there is over everything and the queer feeling in the air. (*He gets up and stretches himself rather wearily.*)

JOHN (*anxiously*). You're tired, maybe. You've been sitting over those boots all day. Aren't they finished yet?

MARTIN. Ay, they're finished now.

JOHN. Well, tisn't worth starting anything else at this hour on a Saturday evening. Wouldn't you take your hat and go for a turn up the mountain. There's a pair of shoes to be left at Mrs. Finlay's, she wants them to go to church in to-morrow, you could leave them on your way.

MARTIN. He's calling this evening to try on the boots.

JOHN. Sure, I'll be here.

MARTIN. Oh, I couldn't be out when he comes. Anyhow, I've got to go into Dublin to-night.

JOHN. Dublin? And what's bringing you to Dublin?

MARTIN. My two legs!

ROBERT. After working all the week out here it's only natural the boy would like to go into town on a Saturday night to see the people and the shops.

JOHN. I'm saying nothing against Dublin, only Martin's getting very fond of it all of a sudden, slipping away there whenever he has a chance, and indeed you're something the same way yourself Bob.

MARTIN (*defiantly*). And don't I work hard enough when I'm here? Do you ever find me micing? Isn't it hard I can't do what I like with my free hours.

JOHN. I'm not blaming you, boy, I'm not blaming you. I'm not trying to put an old head on your young shoulders. You're working well, none better (*he gets up to look out of the door.*) It's too dark to see what I'm stitching. . . . The way you've sat at those boots is a wonder. . . . Ay, there's thunder coming sure enough, there's a terrible black cloud over Kilmashogue.

ROBERT. Miss Curran passed down the road a while ago. I hope she won't get caught in the storm.

JOHN. Ay, I hope not. . . . Show me the boots, Martin. (*MARTIN brings over the pair of Hessians he has been working at. The elder brother examines them in the fading light in the doorway.*)

JOHN. Ay, ay, very nice work indeed, very nice. I couldn't do it better myself. . . . I used to think I'd never make a bootmaker of you, Martin, but I see I was mistaken. What weeshy little stitches, you'd think 'twas for a young lady the boots were intended, and—(*he has put his hand inside the boots*)—what are you after lining them with? That bit of leather was never in my shop.

MARTIN (*awkwardly*). 'Tis a bit I got off a man down at Maynooth, it came into my mind it would line these boots nicely, and I bought it off him. You won't be at the loss of it, John, I paid for it myself.

JOHN. Was it from Owen Lyons of Maynooth you got it?

MARTIN. It was, John.

JOHN. Was he in Dublin on Saturday?

MARTIN. He was not. I went down to Maynooth on—on—a message last Sunday. Is there any reason why I shouldn't go?

JOHN. I've not said a word, have I? You know my opinion of Owen Lyons. I'd think better of him if he'd stick to his last in place of stravaging through the country blathering about the French Revolution and democracy and the Lord knows what. . . . (*looking at the boots again*). And was there nothing here would suit you?

MARTIN. 'Twas such a beautiful soft piece of leather.

JOHN. There's a piece in the corner would have done you, this is too good and too fine for such work. What's come over you at all at all, Martin, one would think these boots were for the Lord Lieutenant himself.

MARTIN (*defiantly*). They're for Mister Emmet.

JOHN. And if they are for Mister Emmet is that any reason you should line them with fancy leather and make stitches like a young lady would sew into her wedding dress?

The Dreamers

MARTIN (*with temper*). If it's nothing to you—

ROBERT (*intervening*). Yerra, John, don't be hard on the boy. If it's his fancy to put more than the value into the boots, and he does it at his own expense, where's the harm in it?

JOHN (*giving MARTIN back the boots*). Martin's free to do what he likes with his own money, but I wouldn't be doing my duty by him as his eldest brother if I didn't try to check him when I think he's going wrong. No man can ever say I've put bad work or bad leather into any pair of shoes left my hand, but there's reason in all things and there's little reason in what Martin's after doing.

MARTIN (*hotly*). What have you against Mister Robert? Where would we be if it wasn't for him and his people? Didn't they bring us here when we had to leave the North and settled us here and got us custom among their friends and relations?

JOHN. I'm grateful for all that, and they're a fine family—I might say a noble family. The old doctor was a real gentleman and poor Mister Tom—no one could say a word against him—and now Mister Robert—

MARTIN. Well, what about him?

JOHN (*has been going to say something more harsh, but looking at Martin's passionate face changes his mind and says mildly*). Well, he's young and he's foolish. I pray God to give him sense.

MARTIN (*hotly*). Everyone who thinks different from you is "foolish," I suppose.

ROBERT. Martin!

MARTIN (*after a moment*). Maybe I shouldn't have said that, John.

JOHN. You've a right to your opinion, but you know little what you're talking about. I do. I've seen and felt—(*he checks himself*)—I'd be sorry to see Mister Robert going Mister Tom's way (*MARTIN laughs excitedly*). Martin, what do you mean by that laugh, what do you mean by it?

MARTIN. What should I mean ?

JOHN (*suspiciously*). If I thought—. Martin, will you tell me there's nothing more in this than meets the eye?

MARTIN (*evasively*). In what ?

JOHN. You know what I mean. Is there ?

MARTIN. Can't you ask Mister Emmet himself presently when he comes to try on the boots.

JOHN (*going back to his bench*). You're changed, Martin. You're not the frank open boy you used to be.

MARTIN (*in a low voice*). I'm sorry, John.

JOHN. It can't be helped. (*Pause.*) Robert, get me out those shoes for Mrs. Finlay. I'll take them up to her myself in a few minutes.

MARTIN. I could run up with them to-morrow morning before breakfast.

JOHN. I promised she'd have them to-night without fail, I can't break my word to her.

ROBERT. There they are for you. (*A pause.*) There's a foot on the path, this will be Mister Emmet himself, I'm thinking.

MARTIN (*jumping up and going to the door*). Ay, it is so. . . . They're done, Mister Emmet, I'm just after putting the last stitches in them.

EMMET (*outside the door*). That's right, Martin. (*He comes in followed by Lacey, who is carrying a parcel.*) Good evening, John, good evening, Robert.

JOHN and ROBERT. Good evening, Sir.

EMMET. This is a friend of mine. He'll be glad to sit down for a moment while I try on the boots. We've come over from Killinacudd.

JOHN. 'Tis a tiring kind of day too, sir, we were just saying and looking now like thunder.

EMMET. Yes. . . . Put the parcel down, Lacey, your arms must be tired from it.

ROBERT. I'll take it from you.

EMMET. I trust it didn't get wet.

LACEY. No, no.

JOHN. Is it raining, sir ?

The Dreamers

EMMET. There was a drop or two.

JOHN. I hope your mother has her health, sir.

EMMET. She is not as well as I would wish. She feels the hot weather.

JOHN. Ay, and she'd miss the poor doctor.

EMMET. 'Tis a loss she'll never recover, I fear.

JOHN. There's more than her miss him. He was a real friend to us. And is there any news of Mister Tom?

EMMET. Nothing of consequence. He's in Paris.

JOHN. She's suffered a deal in the last few years. Her husband dead—her son banished.

EMMET. My mother would never complain, John.

JOHN. No, Mister Robert, she'd be the last to complain, but the first to feel. Young people have a way of thinking that old people don't feel because they're not always crying out the way youngsters are. I'm sure you're too thoughtful and too knowledgeable a young man to make that mistake. You'll see to it that no fresh sorrow lights on her. It's a great duty is before you to watch over her old age. You're all the son she has left now since Mister Tom is gone away. I'm sure you won't fail her.

EMMET (*looking keenly at him*). Why do you say this to me?

JOHN. If it's a liberty I know you'll excuse it, but you're young and I—though maybe I'm not so old in years—I'm old in what I've seen and felt. If you'd seen what I've seen, Mister Robert, you'd think twice before you'd do anything to break the peace of her old age.

EMMET. There are finer things than peace, John. The dead have that. There is a peace that is shameful, a calm that is cowardly, and—

JOHN. And there's war that is only pillage and murder and treachery and—

EMMET. No. You mustn't say that. It isn't true. I know no man suffered more than you did from the late rising, but it doesn't give you the right to bring charges of murder and treachery against the men who died in '98.

JOHN. I'll say no more, only don't be led away by a boy's dream. I don't know what your dream is, but you

The Dreamers

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wouldn't be young and an Emmet without a dream. Believe me, Mister Robert, there's something perverse in this unfortunate country. 'Tis better that we should be governed than that we should govern ourselves. I believe that, with God's help, the English will do it better than anyone else, and I'd humbly say it's the duty of young men like you, Mister Emmet, to help to make that government a success.

EMMET. How can you say we can't govern ourselves when they will never give us the chance?

JOHN (*getting up*). There's something wild and unstable in the country, Mister Robert, you can't get behind or beyond it. I've always been a peaceable man, from the time I was a boy I've thought it was my duty to be loyal to the government God was pleased to put over me, and when the rising came you know how I was entangled in it against my will. What I saw then only confirmed my own opinion. I saw courage and uprightness and daring on the rebels' side—I don't deny it—but it was all brought to naught. You'll say it came to naught for want of arms or leaders or one thing and another, but I say it came to naught because there's something rotten in us, something unstable, 'tisn't in our nature to succeed. . . . Or maybe it came to naught because 'twas God's will that it should. Because He knows more about the needs and weakness of this poor country than you or I. And I needn't call down God's curse on anyone who tries to start the same work again, for there His curse will be without my asking. Can you think of anyone who touched the accursed thing in '98 who wasn't punished for it fifty or a hundred fold? Think of you own family. Think of me—! . . . These are hard things for a young man like you to listen to, but they're the truth . . . If you'll excuse me, Sir, I'll just carry these shoes up to Mrs. Finlay's. Martin will show you the boots. I think you'll find he has made a nice job of them.

(*He goes out.*)

The Dreamers

LACEY. He has a bitter tongue.

ROBERT. You mustn't mind him, sir. There's a sort of frenzy come on him now and again ; he doesn't know what he is saying. There's some people are afraid of him because he's foretold things that happened afterwards, but indeed he's the best brother a man could have, but all he went through has put a sort of a twist in him.

EMMET. He suffered much in '98, Lacey. His wife was a sympathiser with the rebels and hid some in his house unknown to him. There was a fight, she was wounded, he was arrested. When he was released after eight months, his wife was dead and his home and business destroyed. Isn't that the story, Robert ?

ROBERT. Yes sir. (*To Lacey*) But Mister Emmet's leaving out all his people done for us. Mister Tom's friends were among those that were hidden in my brother's house, and he never forgot it to John. 'Twas the old doctor brought us down here and gave John a new start in life.

MARTIN. And now he shows his gratitude in bitter words.

ROBERT. You're talking of what you don't know, boy. You never knew Mary Carroll, your brother's wife. She was something like Miss Palmer, sir, brave and high-spirited ; sure poor John thought the whole world of her. He'd find it hard to forgive the soldiers that piked her to death, or the rebels that brought them around the house.

EMMET. And now I'm taking both of you from him. It will be hard on him. Does he know nothing ?

ROBERT. I think he begins to suspect something. He was questioning Martin this evening.

MARTIN. I can't keep my tongue between my teeth, Mister Emmet, I've got to answer back when he says things against the '98 men. Bob there sits dumb, you'd think he was a King's man, but I get hot all over and I'd burst if I didn't speak.

EMMET. Well, well, Martin, we none of us will have to keep silence very much longer I hope.

ROBERT (*eagerly*). What do you mean by that, sir? Is the day fixed?

EMMET. Almost. The preparations are going on so well and so quickly that we are very nearly ready to strike. Besides the risk of discovery grows every day as the number of men we employ making arms increases. There's not a man of them I wouldn't trust with my life, yet a chance word spoken in innocence might betray us all.

MARTIN. Bob and I will be working all day to-morrow in Patrick Street.

EMMET. Good. There is plenty to do there. I may be there for a time, but Lacey and I have got to see some Wicklow friends in the morning . . . and now, where are the boots?

MARTIN. Here they are, sir. I eased that right boot a trifle where you said it pressed on your foot. I hope it will be all right now . . . Don't trouble, sir, I'll take off your boots, sure 'tis an honour to be of service to you. (*EMMET and ROBERT smile to each other over the eager boy's head as he stoops to take off EMMET's boots and to put on the new ones.*)

MARTIN. There, sir!

EMMET. They seem to be a perfect fit.

ROBERT. Walk across the room, sir.

EMMET (*walking*). They are as easy as if I had them a twelvemonth. Martin you've made a good job of them.

MARTIN. I'm glad they're pleasing to you.

EMMET. Lacey, don't you think they're a pretty pair of boots? 'Tisn't easy to see them in this light, but aren't they a nice cut?

LACEY. They seem to be. Upon my word I must get a pair from this young man.

EMMET. Yes, you are lax about your equipment, Lacey. I believe you haven't placed your order for your uniform yet.

ROBERT. I'm told Kirwan is making a grand job of your uniform, Mister Emmet.

EMMET. It's done. It was finished to-day. Lacey has it there in the parcel.

MARTIN (*eagerly*). Oh, sir ! If——but sure no——

EMMET. What is it, Martin ?

MARTIN. Nothing at all, sir.

EMMET. Maybe you'd like to see it ?

MARTIN. Oh, sir !

ROBERT. Wisha, don't mind him, Mister Emmet. Why should you go to the trouble of unpacking it. We'll see it soon enough on yourself, please God.

EMMET. There's no reason he shouldn't see it. I'm not so accustomed to it myself that I'd dislike another view of it. Open it, Lacey.

ROBERT. I'm afraid we're inconveniencing you, sir. Martin is little more than a boy, and you must forgive him.

MARTIN. I'm eighteen, Bob—at least I will be at Christmas. That's a man, isn't it, sir ?

EMMET. Yes. (*He lays his hand affectionately on his shoulder.*)

LACEY (*coming forward with the uniform*). Here it is.

MARTIN. Oh !

LACEY. A pretty suit, by God !

ROBERT (*touching it*). 'Tis a fine cloth, very handsome.

MARTIN. You must look splendid in it.

EMMET. Ay, it looked well enough when I tried it on this morning, but I wanted your boots and the hat to make the picture complete. Indeed I didn't try on the breeches, being Saturday, there was a crowd at the Depot and neither Kirwan nor I had leisure. I don't think you were there, Lacey ?

LACEY. No. I would have liked to have seen it on you.

MARTIN. Oh, sir—if you went into the room beyond—you have the boots now—there is a mirror here—my brother won't be back for near an hour.

ROBERT. Martin, you wouldn't expect Mister Emmet to put himself out like that.

EMMET. Try them on here—now ? 'Tis an idea !

ROBERT. A foolish one, sir.

EMMET. I don't know, Robert. I had the coat on for only a minute, I should like to examine it at my leisure. Besides, the whole purpose of the uniform is that the leaders may be quickly recognised so you must know what to look for. What do you say, Lacey?

LACEY. There is little harm in it if it pleases you.

MARTIN. Then come, sir.

EMMET. I think I will. Do you think, Robert, we are safe from interruption?

ROBERT. John won't be home for an hour or more, and no one is likely to come to the house. I think you are safe. Anyhow I will stay here and watch.

EMMET. Very well. Is this the room?

MARTIN. Yes, sir, I'll show you the way. (*He leads the way into an inner room and EMMET, LACEY and MARTIN go into it. A peal of distant thunder is heard.*)

MARTIN (*coming back*). We must have a candle, it's very dark in the room. (*He lights a candle from the fire.*) I think I'll take the pair.

ROBERT. Do so. (*MARTIN goes back into the room. There is another peal of thunder, ROBERT goes to the door and looks out.*) There's a bad storm coming. I hope it won't send John home before his time. Martin, it goes to my heart to be deceiving him the way we are. He's the best brother a man ever had. We're like his children to him, and here we are lying—as you may say—with every breath we draw. Shouldn't we tell him—give him a hint—how things are? 'Twill break his heart when he finds out how we've deceived him. (*He turns and sees that MARTIN has gone.*) Sure I'm talking to the air. (*He lights a candle and then goes to shut the door.*) What's that? (*He peers out into the dark.*) Did anyone call?

... Oh! ... Who is it?

A WOMAN'S VOICE OUTSIDE. Oh, Mister Brady, may I come in and shelter myself?

ROBERT. Miss Curran! Is it you? Come in to be sure, there's a bad storm coming.

(*She comes in. She is prettily dressed.*)

The Dreamers

SARAH. I thought I'd be home before it broke—thunder terrifies me. When I saw the light in your window I thought maybe you'd give me shelter till it was passed.

ROBERT. Yerra, to be sure. We saw you going down the road a while ago and were hoping you'd not get caught in the storm. Sit by the fire; are you wet?

SARAH. No, it's not raining yet; only a few drops—'tis silly of me to be afraid of thunder, but I was like that ever since I was a child . . . Oh, what a flash!

ROBERT. I'll close the shutters and draw the curtain the way you won't see it. There's nobody likes thunder I think. 'Tis unnatural. You'd see the very birds and beasts hiding from it. (*He goes and shuts the shutters and draws the curtain.*)

SARAH. Yes, indeed. . . Are your brothers out in the storm?

ROBERT. John went a piece up the road with a pair of shoes for Mrs. Finlay, he'll get shelter easy enough the way he's gone. Martin's beyond in the room with—some friends.

SARAH. Martin's growing quite a man. I've noticed a change in him these last few months—or maybe it's only my fancy.

ROBERT. Ay, he's growing up.

SARAH. Are you very busy these times?

ROBERT. Well, trade's brisk enough.

SARAH. I wish John would come up some day to measure the Councillor for a pair of walking shoes, he wants a new pair badly.

ROBERT. I'll tell John, Miss.

SARAH. After his breakfast, before he goes into town, is the best time to find him in. The last pair he made my father liked so much, and those slippers you made for my sister Jane—she's wearing them yet! We're all so grateful to Mister Emmet for telling us about you.

ROBERT. I'm sure 'tis an honour for us to work for the Councillor or any of his family, and we're very thankful to the poor doctor for getting us your custom.

SARAH. Oh, it wasn't the doctor, it was Mister Robert Emmet told us of you . . . I suppose—is he in Dublin now? We've not seen him these weeks and weeks.

ROBERT. He is in Dublin, Miss.

SARAH. And I suppose well?

ROBERT. He's quite well.

SARAH. I wonder what occupies his time that his friends see so little of him.

ROBERT. I couldn't say then. (*Laughter is heard from the inner room.*)

SARAH. Your friends seem merry. Perhaps I incommoded you by being here?

ROBERT. Not at all, Miss, its only a—a friend—a man we know who's got a new suit of clothes and he's above in the room trying them on.

SARAH. Couldn't he wait till to-morrow to wear them to church?

ROBERT. No, Miss. They've taken all the candles. I'm ashamed to have you sitting in the half dark.

SARAH. He must be very vain—or in love.

ROBERT. If you'll excuse me a minute I'll step in and ask them to give us some more light.

(*He rises, but before he reaches the door to the room it opens, and MARTIN appears carrying a candle.*)

MARTIN. The mirror is here, sir.

EMMET (*in the inner room*). Without the hat it's not quite complete.

MARTIN (*seeing SARAH*). Miss Curran! I didn't know! I heard no voices.

SARAH. It's only me, Martin.

EMMET (*behind*). What's the matter? Lead on, Martin.

MARTIN. Sir—Miss Curran—sir, Miss Sarah!

EMMET. Miss Curran! (*He impulsively pushes past MARTIN into the room*)

MARTIN. Oh, sir, stop! (*It is too late, he is in the room.*)

SARAH (*rising in astonishment*). Mister Emmet!

The Dreamers

EMMET. You !

LACEY has followed EMMET out of the room, and he and MARTIN each stand on one side of EMMET holding a lighted candle. It shows him up in his new uniform.

SARAH. This is a surprise. Robert told me of the man who was trying on his new clothes, but I never guessed 'twas Mister Emmet. (Coming nearer.) It becomes you well. What is it ? Have you joined the yeomanry ? Surely not, and this isn't their uniform unless I make a mistake. I am stupid about such things. . . . You are all silent ! What is it ? . . . Has anything happened ?

EMMET. Nothing at all. And as to this dress—it's of a new service I take—I will tell you of it some other time. Martin has made my boots, and I had a fancy to try how the whole looked. That is all.

SARAH. It looks very well, if my poor opinion is worth anything to you. I thought I knew you well, but I did not know that you added a taste in clothes to your other accomplishments. I wish Jane could see you !

EMMET. How is she ? How are you all ?

SARAH (lightly). How much you care when it's two months since we saw you ! If the storm hadn't driven me here I suppose 'twould be another two before we'd meet.

EMMET. I have been busy.

SARAH. I am sure of it.

EMMET. Are you alone ? I will convey you home.

SARAH. I would never forgive myself if you spoiled your pretty clothes on my account.

EMMET. I can change them. Is it raining ?

LACEY (opening the door). Ay, heavily.

EMMET. We must get a conveyance for Miss Curran. She would get soaked walking from here to the Priory in that rain. Robert, would there be any chance of finding an empty coach going back to Dublin ?

ROBERT. There might be. I'll go and look.

SARAH. I'm afraid you'll get wet.

MARTIN. I'll go too, Bob.

EMMET. Thank you.

(They go out.)

EMMET (to LACEY). Those papers you enquired about are in the pocket of my other coat—you could read them now. Take a candle with you.

(LACEY takes the hint and goes into the other room.

As soon as the door is closed.)

SARAH (in a troubled voice). What does it mean?

EMMET. Mean?

SARAH (touching his coat). This. I laughed about it, but I saw that—I feel it means something—what it is I don't know—can you not tell me?

EMMET. May it not be only masculine vanity, a silly weakness I have hid from all my friends that you only have discovered?

SARAH. No, no. Say you can't tell me if you will, but don't try to blind me in that way. All these weeks—when you didn't come near us—I felt there was something, and lately that feeling has grown to be a sort of terror. I have been questioned about you—there are whisperings.

EMMET (quickly). Who has questioned you?

SARAH. Mister McNally and others. I told them nothing. I knew nothing of course, but if I did I would not tell.

EMMET. No. I know you would not. For your own sake I did not want you to know . . . (a pause). Miss Sarah, you are right. There is more in this (touching the coat) than meets the eye. There is all that I hope for and that you—dread.

SARAH. A—a plan? A rising?

EMMET (bows his head).

SARAH. Oh!

EMMET (after waiting for her to speak). Is that all? I thought I would have had your sympathy.

SARAH. Yes, yes, you have. But oh, have you considered well what you are attempting? Have you

weighed the risks, have you understood the weight of authority there must be against you ?

EMMET. Yes.

SARAH. Have you forgotten the failure in '98, have you forgotten all the hard lessons we were taught then, have you remembered the sufferings—all for nothing—that came upon the unfortunate people of this country ?

EMMET. Yes.

SARAH. And yet you are going to make another attempt ?

EMMET. Yes.

SARAH. What hopes have you now that you had not then ? What have you that makes you think success likely ? Are you better prepared, better armed, better led ?

EMMET. I believe we are.

SARAH. But do the people—the mass of the people—want it ? Will they support you ?

EMMET. If they fought as they did in '98, when they still possessed a semblance of liberty, will they not fight doubly well now when that semblance has been taken from them against their will ?

SARAH. I cannot tell. The people seem so contented, the Viceroy is kind and forbearing. It was only yesterday my father was remarking on the peaceable, contented state of the country.

EMMET. That content is only surface deep. I am in touch with the whole country. I know. I have positive assurance that nineteen counties will rise when the signal is given.

SARAH. Nineteen ? Are you certain of that ?

EMMET. It's not like you to try and discourage me.

SARAH. But it is only because I so earnestly wish for your success that I say these things. You are so true and noble yourself I wonder do you realise that everyone is not like you. I see you smile, you think it's ridiculous for a girl like me to be preaching about human nature, but I am not the daughter of a lawyer for nothing ! I know

there'll be so many to give you lip-service, so few to give you heart—life-service. Oh, don't be deceived. Don't act hastily. You know yourself that a second failure now will ruin the cause for ever. If the French fail again—I cannot trust them—

EMMET. I am expecting nothing from the French.

SARAH. What! You are risking this alone?

EMMET. Yes. I have no wish to exchange masters. Buonaparte or George, there is little to choose between them. Were the French to come as invaders I would dispute every inch of ground with them. It's absurd to speak of them as the champions of liberty. Look at Switzerland, look at France herself. I would accept aid from France as from an ally, I would never invite her as a conqueror—but, even as an ally, she will not help us this time.

SARAH. But if no French are coming where will you get arms?

EMMET. I have depots working day and night in Dublin manufacturing arms. I have 3,000 men in Dublin ready to follow my lead. I have only to raise my hand and Wexford, Wicklow and Kildare will send thousands of men to join them, and when Dublin has given the signal the nineteen counties will rise as one man.

SARAH. It is to start in Dublin then?

EMMET. Yes: Once Dublin is in our hands and can be held I am convinced the rest is easy.

SARAH. Will it not be very difficult to capture Dublin?

EMMET. Not if we can strike quickly before the authorities suspect us. But time is what we need most—and money.

SARAH. If I could do anything—I have no money—

EMMET. No, no, I would not have you in the smallest degree connected with it—it's too dangerous—that is why I have given up going to the Priory—in a few weeks I may be an outlaw with a price on my head—then it will be your protection to be able to say you have not seen me for months.

SARAH. An outlaw ! Oh no, you must succeed, you will.

EMMET. Yes, I believe I will. Oh, Miss Sarah, I am so well served. The industry of these men, the faith they have in me, it's impossible these things should fail to bring about the result we are all striving for.

SARAH. And afterwards—when you are successful—will we be permitted to know you again ?

EMMET. Afterwards ? It has been my thought—when I have done this, perhaps—. Miss Sarah, up to this I have done nothing, nothing I mean that is worth anything, nothing that could make me—worthy of you. I can't be surprised that you gave me the answer you did that spring day in the woods in Glen Dhu, I had no right to ask you that question, no right to expect you to return that feeling I have for you. But after this is over, if I succeed, if Ireland is freed, if I go to you with this gift in my hand, is there any hope that what you said to me in the wood may be changed ? I am not asking you to answer me now, I know nothing has happened since to make you alter your opinion, but—oh, Sarah, is there any hope, any—

SARAH. Oh, how can I tell, I have always liked you. If you were doing this only for my sake—oh, Robert, I would to God you were clear of this business, I have a foreboding.

EMMET. Sarah—

SARAH. Hush, I hear voices. The men are coming back.

(Steps are heard outside the door and voices and a man called HENRY HOWLEY bursts in followed by ROBERT and MARTIN. Hearing the noise of voices LACEY too comes in from the next room.)

HOWLEY. Mister Emmet !

EMMET. Yes, Howley. What is it ?

HOWLEY. An explosion—at the Patrick Street Depot !

EMMET. My God !

HOWLEY. Mr. Long went to Alleyburne's looking for you ; they said you had left, and sent me on here to search for you.

EMMET. What has happened?

HOWLEY. It was that damned careless fool M'Daniel. Two men were injured, the house went on fire, the whole quarter was aroused.

EMMET. The authorities, of course, have entered the place?

HOWLEY. Not up to the time I left. We tried to make little of it, to gain time to remove the arms. Your presence is needed, the men are unnerved, running hither and thither, declaring all is discovered.

EMMET. I will go in immediately. (*He looks for his hat.*)

ROBERT. You can't go in those clothes, sir.

EMMET. There is not time to change. I'll take off the coat and waistcoat, and if you will lend me a cloak, Robert, no one will notice anything strange about my dress.

MARTIN runs into the next room and brings out the coat and waistcoat. ROBERT fetches a cloak.

EMMET (*while he is changing*). You must go to the Depot in Marshalsea Lane, Lacey, send all the workmen to their homes. Tell them to remain indoors in case they are wanted. Tell any friends you see to go home quietly. Let there be no buzz at street corners, no whispering in public houses. The authorities must not be allowed to suspect there is anything at all in this.

HOWLEY. I am afraid they are certain to search the premises.

EMMET. But even a few hours delay which will give us time to carry away the arms may save us.

LACEY. It can never be kept secret after this.

EMMET. The arms must be taken away to-night. Robert, Martin, you must come in with me. There is plenty of work to be done.

ROBERT. We're ready, sir.

HOWLEY. This will hasten things.

EMMET. I fear so. We may have to give the signal at

once. Well, well, I will see how things are when I get to town . . . I am ready.

HOWLEY, ROBERT, and LACEY go out. EMMET and MARTIN are following. EMMET turns back.

EMMET. Miss Curran, would you oblige me by rolling up that coat and placing it—where, Martin?

MARTIN. Behind the chest, Miss, it would be hidden.

EMMET. Very well, behind the chest.

ROBERT (*calling from outside*). Come on Martin, I see John coming down the road. We should be gone before he sees us.

MARTIN goes out.

EMMET. Goodbye . . . You are not crying? Why this is only an accident, a mere trifle.

SARAH. Robert!

EMMET. Don't fear for me. It will be all right.

SARAH. God keep you safe. Oh, Robert, I cannot let you go without saying it—whatever happens—your success I mean, I do not need it—

EMMET. You mean?

SARAH. Yes.

EMMET. That is all I wanted.

SARAH. Forgive me for what I said in Glen Dhu. It wasn't true even then, 'tis ten thousand times less true now.

EMMET kisses her.

EMMET. I must go.

SARAH. I wish I could go with you. Take something of mine—some pledge—a ribbon—I haven't one. I will find something. I will put it into the pocket of your new coat. Now go—God bless you.

EMMET goes.

She stands for a moment after he has gone, then slowly gathers up the coat and waistcoat. She holds them at arms' length looking at them. She lays her cheek against the coat. She searches her dress for a ribbon or some token to give him; she finds nothing. Then she looks in the room for a scissors, finds it, and cuts

off a lock of her hair, which she wraps in her handkerchief and puts into the pocket of his coat. The door is opened violently and JOHN comes in.

SARAH. Oh, Mister Brady !

JOHN. Miss Curran ! I didn't know you were here. But maybe you can tell me what it's all about.

SARAH. What ?

JOHN. I met them on the road—my brothers, Mister Emmet, and a couple of men—hurrying in to Dublin. I tried to speak to them, to ask them what was their business. Bob pushed past me without a word. Martin was like one possessed. My God, what does it mean ?

SARAH. It means nothing.

JOHN. Nothing ? But their haste ? Miss Curran, tell me what you know ? (*He catches her arm.*)

SARAH. Nothing.

JOHN. Come what will I must save Martin. He's like my own son to me. Will you swear there's nothing in this ?

SARAH. Oh, you are hurting me ! (*He lets her go. EMMET's coat drops from her arms.*)

JOHN (*more quietly*). I ask your pardon, Miss, I forget myself, but when there's any question of danger threatening Martin (*he picks up the coat and goes to lay it on the table, he sees the waistcoat lying there. He looks at the coat in his hand.*) What is this ? Whose is this ?

SARAH. I cannot tell you.

JOHN (*looking at it again*). I see. (*He puts it down and goes to the door.*)

SARAH. Where are you going ?

JOHN. To Dublin.

SARAH. What are you going to do ?

JOHN. I am going to the Castle.

SARAH. You would betray them ?

JOHN. I would get a stop put to that young man's foolishness before 'tis too late.

SARAH. Would you inform on Mister Emmet ?

JOHN, I would.

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SARAH. That is how you would show your gratitude for all they have done for you ?

JOHN. It will be kinder to him. Now they will only transport him at worst, in a few months time—maybe—he may have put his neck into a noose. But it's the brothers I'm thinking of. I must save them even if it means ruining Mister Emmet's plans.

SARAH (*laying her hand on his arm*). You shall not go.

JOHN (*shaking it off*). Nothing living can stop me.

SARAH. No. But the dead can.

JOHN. The dead ?

SARAH. Mary Carroll, your wife.

JOHN. Mary ?

SARAH. Mary, who hid the rebels, who fought the soldiers, who gave her life for her country. Are you going to betray Mary's country, Mary's rebels ?

JOHN. It's Martin—he's such a lad—no more than a boy—Mary herself wouldn't expect it of me.

SARAH. Mary herself gave up everything.

JOHN. Oh, Miss Sarah !

SARAH. You can't do it, John.

JOHN. You're right. I can't. But may my curse fall on—no, there's no use in cursing, 'tis only an hour ago I said they didn't need curses to destroy them. Oh, Miss SARAH, what can I do, what can I do? (*He sits down in despair.*)

SARAH. Nothing. We can do nothing.

JOHN. You're not for it either ?

SARAH. I'm afraid for it.

JOHN. Oh, Miss Sarah, speak to Mister Emmet, beg him to give up his mad scheme, he'd listen to you, maybe : he'd do it for your sake, I know he would. Speak to him—Sarah. No. 'Twould be no use. It's more to him than life or love.

JOHN. Oh, Martin, Martin !

A pause.

SARAH. I must go home. Will you give Martin that coat ?

JOHN. I'll see you safe home.

SARAH. You need not. The rain is over, the sky is clearing.

JOHN. Indeed I'll go with you. (*He steps outside the door.*) Ay, the sky is clearing. But 'tis terribly dark over Dublin.

SARAH (*following him*). Yes. Very, very dark over Dublin. . . . Come, John.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A room in the White Bull Inn, Thomas Street, furnished plainly with a table and chairs. It is the morning of July 23rd. When the curtain goes up the room is empty. Then seven or eight farmers come in followed by EMMET. They sit. EMMET remains standing.*

EMMET. Well?

There is a shuffle and a murmur, no distinct answer.

EMMET. You have seen the arms now, I have explained the plans again to you. What is your final opinion?

THOMAS FREYNE. Indeed, there's a great show of pikes.

MCCARTNEY. The joints in them are a grand idea entirely.

HANNAY. Ay, ay. (*A little complimentary murmur goes round.*)

EMMET. May I take it then that you're satisfied with the preparations and will give us all the help is in your power to-night?

A pause.

MORRISSEY (*an old man who speaks very slowly and deliberately*). We're here, I suppose, for plain speaking, so I've no hesitation in saying exactly what's lying on my mind. Mister Emmet, when Jack Mahon and Thomas Wyld came down to Kildare to speak to me and others about this matter I'll own I was uncertain in my mind, I doubted whether anyone could do what you were setting out to do—let alone a man as young as yourself. “ ‘Tis only the foolish dream of a boy,” them were my very words to Jack Mahon, “ ‘tis only the foolish dream of a boy.” After that others in this room met you and

told me about you and that I'd have to change my opinion. But you know it wasn't till to-day you and I came face to face. Mister Emmet, I suppose I seem a very old man to you and I know you seem a very young man to me, but before I go farther I'd like to say that I take back those words. 'Tis not foolish: and 'tis no dream. The arms and the plans are plain, solid facts, and I don't believe there's another one in Ireland only yourself could have brought them about. We've seen the arms now and I think they're a grand collection, and 'tis marvellous to me how they could be made in Dublin and the government not to know it, we've heard the plans and I venture to say there's not a man living could better them. But 'twill be time enough for compliments when the rising's well over, and what I want to ask Mister Emmet is this; Are we ready to rise to-night? 'Tis because the plans are so good and the arms so fine and just because I trust Mister Emmet himself entirely that I'm asking him to tell us if he's satisfied himself that we should make the attempt to-night and not wait a bit longer.

EMMET. What particular reasons have you for thinking the attempt should be postponed?

MORRISSEY. McCartney, will you answer that. You're more conversant with such things than I am, and 'tis you were talking to the workmen.

MCCARTNEY (*a middle-aged man speaking in an abrupt voice*). Mister Emmet, you musn't take it that I've been poking about trying to find fault with your preparations, but you said yourself we could talk to the workmen in the Depot and ask them to explain the grenades and them beams and things.

EMMET. Certainly.

MCCARTNEY. I know something about such matters, sir, and naturally I was very much interested in your inventions, though I'd like to be sure they'd work and not be trusting to experimental machines at a critical time like this.

EMMET. They have got beyond being mere experi-

ments, Mister McCartney. I have carefully tested them, and I assure you they will prove deadly weapons. I have made a study of such things and I do not speak without knowledge.

McCARTNEY. I am glad to hear that, sir. I've no doubt—as you say—they will prove very deadly—if they can be fired.

EMMET. If—? What do you mean?

McCARTNEY. There's only a couple of those beams ready for use at the present moment, sir. The rest of them aren't loaded or mounted on the wheels.

EMMET. Fletcher is to finish them to-day.

McCARTNEY. I know that Fletcher was down in Kildare yesterday gathering men. I've no doubt it was right for him to be there, but he's the only one knows about the fuzes and rammers. He's not back yet. If he was working from six o'clock this morning he wouldn't have all those beams ready by nightfall.

EMMET. Are you sure of this, McCartney? Fletcher had no orders from me to go to Kildare. His business was to finish the beams.

McCARTNEY. Sure I met him myself down in the country yesterday and the man at the Depot told me the same story and that he hadn't come back yet, and that there was no one knew about them rammers only himself.

EMMET. I was unaware of this.

McCARTNEY. Then there's the scaling-ladders. You know yourself we can't do a bit without them. How many's finished? One. The smith who has the irons for the others is an Englishman—an old soldier—and I'm told they darent tell him the need there is for hurry. 'Tisn't likely on a Saturday when there's country folk in with horses to be shod, and the like, that he'll have time to put his hand to them.

HANNAY. Ay, that's true.

McCARTNEY. There's a pile of pikes there and very good pikes they are, I've never seen better, and no one knows better than I do that a pike's a grand weapon in

the hands of the right man. But, Sir, you must know yourself that pikes are only good at close quarters. You can't hold a building with pikes. Now your plan for taking the Castle is a very good plan—I haven't a word to say against it—and I think 'tis likely we'll seize the Castle without much difficulty. But when we've got it we've got to hold it. We've got to hold it against the soldiers. We can't hold it with pikes, Mister Emmet. We want muskets. We want blunderbusses. There's only a couple in the Depot.

EMMET. We'll get them off the soldiers in the Castle.

McCARTNEY.—I'm told there's only a handful of men there.

EMMET. There is a store of arms in the Castle.

McCARTNEY. Maybe there is and maybe there isn't. Are we to go running up and down the passages in the Castle peeping into this room and that looking for arms while the soldiers are shooting us down? No, sir, we'll have to take chances enough to-night without taking that sort of chance.

EMMET. There wasn't the money there to buy muskets. I've spent every penny of my own money and every penny I could raise.

MORRISSEY (*gently*). Mister Emmet, you musn't take it that we're blaming *you*. If everyone had worked like you we wouldn't be sitting here now finding fault with the preparations. But, sir, a rising is a very serious thing. 'Tis a matter of life or death to most of us. I don't mean that there's one of us here—I think I can speak for all present—who wouldn't be ready to lose his life if he thought he could serve any purpose by so doing. But there's more than our lives in this business, there's our wives and families—you know how they'll be treated if the rising's a failure, there's our farms we've got together in the sweat of our brows and the labour of our hands. We're ready to risk them all if necessary, but not madly, not foolishly. That's why I ask you, sir, can't we put this off for a while? You heard the faults McCartney

found, there's not one of them that a little time won't cure.

EMMET. There is nothing that McCartney has said that I do not agree with. The preparations are not as complete as I would have hoped. To some extent that is due to the unfortunate explosion last week in the other depot, by which we lost a number of pikes, and which has shaken and unnerved many of the workers in Dublin so that they have been running hither and thither this last week instead of attending to their appointed duties as they should have done. The man Fletcher is an example of that. If I could postpone the rising I would gladly do so. But it is impossible. There are three reasons why it cannot be put off. First ; I am convinced it would be impossible to keep the matter secret from the Government any longer. Hundreds know of it in Dublin and with Castle spies creeping in every street it must reach the ears of the authorities very soon. They must suspect something from the explosion last week. Indeed the very fact that they took it so quietly is a proof to me that they think there is more behind it and do not want to scare us till all is known to them. Secondly ; we have fixed on this date for the rising and a large body of Wexford men are in town waiting for the signal, a large body of Wicklow men are marching into Dublin and will be here this afternoon. 'Tis impossible for this large body of men to remain in the city for an indefinite time, the authorities would suspect their presence, and if we send them home will they trust us and come up again later when we want them ? But the third reason is the most important. I hardly like to put it into words. But you are all such true friends of mine and of Ireland that I can trust you not to make use of it to hinder our cause. . . . I have said that the explosion last week shook our Dublin friends. I feel if there is any delay now, any hesitation, any suspicion of ill-preparedness or dread of failure their confidence will be so shaken that I will be unable to rely on them. Do not mistake me, I have loyal helpers in Dublin who

would follow me, I know, if I set out alone to take the Castle, but the others—the great majority—they are like straw thrust into a fire, they blaze up quickly and brightly but have no *lasting* flame. They are as good as any men if you can use them quickly. Everything depends on Dublin. You know it is to be the signal, the rocket that will fire the whole country from North to South. It has not to make a big effort, but it has to make a quick, a decided effort. It must strike quickly and without hesitation. I can trust the country to do the rest. If there was nothing but the Castle in our hands and it held strongly I believe our success would be assured. But if the authorities get wind of our plans, if they make counter preparations then all is lost. Dublin can make a dart, it cannot sustain a long flight. . . . These are my reasons for saying that the rising cannot be postponed. They are reasons which I think cannot be gainsayed.

HANNAY (*a youngish, disagreeable man, with more of the country attorney about him than the farmer*). That's all very plausible, Mister Emmet, but it's hardly encouraging to us. Personally I know I'd like to see something of these Dublin men before I come into it to-night. If they're as weak as you seem to think they are the sooner we wash our hands of the whole matter the better. Why aren't we allowed to meet the Dublin leaders? We're told they're here and thousands of followers, but divil a one have I seen except the fellows working at the Depot, and 'tis easy to be a patriot when you're getting good wages and doing safe work—

EMMET. Pardon, sir. These workers get their food and lodging, that is all. Not one of them is paid. Their patriotism, which you sneer at, is at least worth their weekly wages. As to the safety of their work, one of them proved that last Saturday with his life.

TRENAGHAN. Well spoken, sir!

HANNAY. Well, that doesn't affect my point that I'd like to meet them Dublin leaders. We're told there's Wexford men and Wicklow men ready. Where are they?

Can't ye get us all sitting round a table, and when this man says "I can answer for fifty men and twenty muskets," and another says "I'll have two hundred men to my back, well armed," well, then we'll know where we are. Now we're groping in the dark like blind puppies. Maybe if the truth were known there's no Wicklow or Wexford men in it at all—

TRENAGHAN (*sharply*). We have Mister Emmet's word for it.

HANNAY. I don't doubt his word for a minute, but I'd like to see them face to face, as I said. As to the arms, I agree with McCartney. We're only a set of foolish children to be going out with pikes in our hands against the soldiers' muskets.

THOMAS FREYNE. There are them grenades.

HANNAY. I wouldn't trust my life to one of them, Tom. Come, Mister Emmet, send a boy out for the Dublin leaders and the men from the country and let us talk it over together.

EMMET. No, I will not do that.

HANNAY (*turning to the others almost triumphantly*). There now!

EMMET. It is for your own sakes that I refuse. All through the country—through nineteen counties—preparations for this rising are going on. With a few exceptions I know personally the leaders in each county—tried, trusted men—but no county knows anything of the leaders in the other counties. Can you not see the safety that lies in this fact? If for any reason the conspiracy fails a certain number of us are certain to be arrested. Far be it from me to suspect—still less expect—that any of my friends should by means of threats or promises turn informer: there is, however, never a conspiracy without its Judas, but in the present venture Judas will not have knowledge enough to purchase his freedom. This security has won us many thousands of followers, I do not intend to shake their confidence in me now. Comrades, you will have to trust me, you will have to accept my word

for it. The Wexford men are here under a famous leader, a man I would trust as I would my own brother. A message was sent to the Wicklow men two days ago, they will reach Dublin this afternoon—five hundred of them I hope—they too are well and fearlessly led. Dublin, if we rise at once, strengthened by these country contingents, will not disgrace herself. But hesitation now means the loss of everything.

There is a little pause after he speaks and a murmur.

TRENAGHAN (*a younger man than HANNAY, passionate, vigorous, impetuous*). I've only a few words to say and its this ; I've seen the arms the same as the rest of you and I've heard the plans and I say that a man who could contrive such a plan and get the Dublin men to make such arms won't be baffled by the failure of a couple of men to-night or the want of a few muskets. From what I know of the country the lads are just bursting to rise. There are difficulties before us to be sure, no one could have spoken fairer of them than Mister Emmet did himself : to my mind if anything he made more of them than they deserve. I don't believe the Dublin men are as timid as he seems to think, they're living here under the very shadow of the Castle, and 'tisn't to be expected they'd have the same courage and outspoken contempt for the authorities as we have or the men from the mountains. I think there's no fear of Dublin failing, but, by God, I think there's a fear of Kildare. I was ashamed to hear the way some of yes talked. You and your risks and your farms and your wives ! Bedad, I've a farm myself and it's a better farm than yours, William Morrissey—and I've a wife and two young children, but, by God, I'll chance them all and follow Mister Emmet to-night. Speak up to them, Mister Emmet. Tell them they're a pack of damned cowards.

PETER FREYNE. I'll let no man call me a coward.

MORRISSEY (*restrainingly*). Peter !

EMMET. There is no need to talk of cowardice, but—

A knock at the door.

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PETER FREYNE (*who is nearest the door*). Who is it ?

ROBERT BRADY's VOICE. Is Mister Emmet there ?

EMMET. It's Brady. I know him. Let him come in.
(ROBERT BRADY comes in.) Well Robert ?

ROBERT. I'm after leaving your note with Mister Long, sir. He sends you his compliments and says he'll let you have what you want as soon as possible.

EMMET. Thank you, Robert. (ROBERT goes out.) That was a message from a rich friend of mine in Dublin, who has helped me greatly with money. In my extremity to-day I asked him for five hundred pounds to buy fire-arms. You have heard his answer. . . . (*There is a little murmur of appreciation*) After that, can you hesitate any longer ? There is something in what Trenaghan says. Suppose the failure lies at the door—not of Dublin—but of Kildare ? Once Dublin has successfully risen you in Kildare can do little to help us. There is no large town for you to seize. Your duty is to help Dublin. Surely you will not hold back. Surely Kildare will not be found wanting. Has Edward Fitzgerald died in vain ? I should have thought you would be eager to avenge his blood, I should have thought the men of Kildare would be vying with the men of Wicklow and Wexford for the right to strike the first blow at his assassins.

A pause.

MORRISSEY. Well, Mister Emmet, after what you've said I'm with you. I can't say that everything is as I could wish it, but if Wicklow and Wexford stand to you I'll not have it said that Kildare deserted.

PETER FREYNE. Whatever we are we're not cowards.

THOMAS FREYNE. I'm with Mister Emmet.

McCARTNEY. And I (*affirmative murmurs from all*).

EMMET. That is well. The hour of assembly is from six to nine to-night at the Depot. I will want some of you to come in the coaches with me.

McCARTNEY. There are to be four coaches ?

EMMET. Perhaps, but at any rate two. Each will

convey eight men. They drive in at the upper gate of the Castle into the yard, come out of the coaches, turn back and seize the guard. At the same time attacks are made on the Castle from six other points. I will use Kildare men for these attacks.

McCARTNEY. 'Tis a sound scheme.

MORRISSEY. You'll give us your word of honour, sir, that the Wicklow and Wexford men are ready to join?

EMMET. I give you my word that there are at the present moment three hundred Wexford men in town under the leadership of a man of courage and daring. They have their orders already for to-night. I know they will not fail me. I give you my word that I despatched a messenger two days ago to Wicklow. I can trust their leader to do the rest. I know he will be in Dublin this afternoon at the head of, I hope, five hundred men.

MORRISSEY. That is all we want.

McCARTNEY. Ay, if Wicklow is there we're all right.

VOICES. Ay, 'tis all right. We'll chance it anyway . . . We're with you now, Mister Emmet. . . .

A knock at the door.

EMMET. Who is that?

ROBERT. Brady, sir.

EMMET. Come in.

ROBERT *comes in leading with him a man.*

ROBERT. This is Roche, sir. He's come back and we can't get any sense out of him. Maybe you should question him yourself.

EMMET. Roche? Oh yes. There is no need to question him. All he had to do was to deliver my message. No answer was necessary.

ROBERT. He's so strange, sir. He won't say a word.

EMMET. Why, Roche, you know Robert Brady, you know he's a friend? Did you find the man I sent you to seek? Did he give you any message for me?

ROCHE *says nothing, his eyes are fixed on the ground.*

MORRISSEY. Who is this man?

EMMET. He is the messenger I sent to the Wicklow leader. . . . You are back soon, you must have found him without difficulty.

ROCHE makes no answer.

ROBERT (*in a low voice*). He won't speak at all, sir.

MORRISSEY. It looks to me as if the man had been drinking.

EMMET (*startled*). Drinking? Roche, do you hear me? Answer me?

ROCHE (*in a very low voice*). Yes sir.

EMMET. Why don't you answer my questions?

ROCHE. I—I— (*His hands work nervously*.)

MORRISSEY. The man's crying.

EMMET. Crying? Roche, what's the matter? Has anything happened? For God's sake tell me.

ROCHE. I—oh, sir—in Rathfarnham—

EMMET. Rathfarnham? Yes, what about it?

ROCHE. I went there—Sweeny's—

EMMET. Yes. Sweeny's, well?

ROCHE doesn't speak.

ROBERT. Sure, Sweeny has a publichouse in Rathfarnham, and I remember I heard there had been a stranger there all Thursday and yesterday drinking.

EMMET. But Roche was up in the mountains for the last two days.

ROBERT. Maybe he—(*taking him roughly by the shoulders and shaking him*). Tell us, man, did you ever get beyond Rathfarnham at all? Wasn't you up at Sweeny's the last two days drinking yourself drunk and sober? Did you see e'er a sight of the mountains except from Sweeny's window or the leader or a bit?

ROCHE. I only went into Sweeny's to get a noggin of whiskey put into my bottle. Oh, Mister Emmet, I swear I never meant to. I put my mouth to the bottle, it was a damp morning, and till this morning when Sweeny flung me out on the road I don't remember a bit.

EMMET (*quite calmly*). So you didn't see the man I sent you to or deliver my message?

ROCHE. Oh, I've destroyed you, you ought to have me killed. Oh, Mister Emmet, I'd have cut off my two hands before I'd let it happen, but I swear I never remembered a bit. 'Tis only once in three years I've done such a thing. I was so high up in myself that you'd choose me to take the message I thought a little drop would be no harm to me—oh, Mister Emmet, I've destroyed you, I'll never forgive myself for this day's work; never.

EMMET. Take him away, Robert.

ROBERT. Come on out of this. (*He drags him roughly out*)

HANNAY. What does all this mean, sir?

EMMET. It means that Wicklow has not received my message.

McCARTNEY. Then they won't be with us to-night?

EMMET. No, they can't.

VOICES. What's that? Wicklow not in it?

EMMET (*raising his voice*). My messenger never reached Wicklow. It will not—cannot—help us to-night.

HANNAY. That's a nice thing, indeed.

McCARTNEY. Faith if that drunken blackguard is a type of the Dublin men, Mister Emmet is right not to trust them very far.

MORRISSEY. This is serious news, Mister Emmet.

EMMET. Very serious, I do not deny it.

McCARTNEY. No ladders, no muskets, no cannons and no Wicklow men! And do you still go for to say, Mister Emmet, that we should rise to-night?

EMMET. Yes.

HANNAY. What about your messenger to Wexford, Emmet? Did he get drunk too?

EMMET. The Wexford men are already in town.

HANNAY. Ay, are they. Faith, this settles it for me. I'm not going into it without the Wicklow men.

PETER FREYNE. Nor I.

MORRISSEY. Mister Emmet, be advised by an old man. Put it off. 'Tis only headstrong folly to try to bring it off to-night.

The Dreamers

EMMET. I dare not—cannot—put it off, Morrissey.

HANNAY. I'm off to tell every Kildare man I meet to go away home.

EMMET (*to McCARTNEY*). And you?

McCARTNEY. I—I won't stop a man from joining you to-night, but for myself—I can't.

EMMET (*to MORRISSEY*). Do you say the same?

MORRISSEY. Mister Emmet, the people look up to me as a sort of a leader, I'd be failing them if I didn't tell them that in my opinion 'tis only reckless folly to attempt anything to-night. Couldn't you put it off—say till Wednesday. The Wexford men could wait till then, and there would be time to send word to Wicklow, the Kildare men who are in town could stop over or go home and come up again.

HANNAY AND MULLIGAN. Ay, Wednesday.

EMMET. No, no, it's gone too far to change now. We must strike to-night. If we don't—

TRENAGHAN. Ay, we'll strike to-night, and to hell with shirkers.

MARTIN (*coming in*). Mister Emmet, you're wanted at the Depot. Seemingly they've mixed the prepared matches with the unprepared, and no one can tell which is which. Maybe you'd know.

McCARTNEY (*scornfully*). Will you listen to that! Yerra, Mister Emmet, you should have nothing more to do with them drunken, bungling fools.

EMMET. I must leave you. I have important work to do and I fear my words here are of little use. You know the position. It is for you to say if you and your followers will come in or stay out.

HANNAY. I'm going home.

MULLIGAN. And I.

MORRISSEY. 'Tis too risky, 'tis hopeless.

EMMET. Very well, I will leave you. I am sorry. I believe you are all true friends of Ireland. Some day I believe you will regret that you stood aside to-day.

TRENAGHAN. I'm with you, Mister Emmet, anyway.

EMMET. Come with me to the Depot then. (*He goes out with MARTIN.*)

TRENAGHAN. Come on, Tom. Leave them to their crops and their caution.

TRENAGHAN and TOM FREYNE *go out.*

PETER FREYNE. I'll break Tom's head if he calls me a coward. (*He starts to follow them.*)

MULLIGAN. Yerra, don't mind them Peter. Let them go their own way. Sure we all know you're no coward. wait and have a drink with me. Hannay, you're not going? You'll have a glass. Sit down, Peter, sit down man.

HANNAY. I suppose I may as well.

MULLIGAN (*goes to the door.*) Julia! . . . Julia! . . . Oh there you are. . . . (*Talks outside the door for a minute.* The others in the room are silent, only PETER FREYNE mutters something now and then under his breath. MULLIGAN *comes back.*) Don't go, Morrissey. (*To McCARTNEY.*) Stay awhile, can't you, Joe. I've ordered a little refreshment.

MORRISSEY. I must see the boys and send any I can home. My heart's heavy. I don't doubt we're right not to rise to-night, but it goes to my heart to desert that brave young man.

HANNAY. Sure we can easily join in later on if it's a success.

MORRISSEY. That was never my way, sir.

He goes out with McCartney.

MULLIGAN. Ah, he's a grand old man, he'd ate you for making him out a coward. (*JULIA comes in with a tray of glasses and drink.*) Oh, Julia, you weren't long. Faith two of the company have departed, but we'll make shift to drink their share. . . . You're getting prettier every day, Julia. There's Mister Hannay now, a single man on the look-out for a wife. . . . What would you think of him?

JULIA. Get along with you, Mister Mulligan. (*She goes out.*)

MULLIGAN. What'll we drink to? The rising?

HANNAY. 'Tisn't the time for risings when the price of cattle is good and the harvest promises well.

FREYNE. That's true. What we want is a month of dry weather to reap the oats.

MULLIGAN. Well then—here's to a good harvest!
(They drink.)

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.—*In Marshalsea Lane. The door of the Depot is in the centre with one or two steps leading up to it. MARTIN is standing in the doorway at the top of the steps looking anxiously up the lane. It is nine o'clock on the evening of the 23rd July, the lane is in darkness, but light streams from the Depot through the doorway. Two men come up the lane.*

MARTIN. Any sign of the coaches, Jerry?

JERRY. Devil a sign. There's an empty coach standing at the end of Bridgefoot Street, but there's ne'er a sign of Howley.

MARTIN. What can have happened to him at all?

JERRY. What time is it?

MARTIN. Close on nine o'clock.

JERRY. Yerra, Howley was to have all the coaches here be half-past eight.

JIM. Maybe we ought to go and get other coaches.

MARTIN. Mister Emmet says not to. He trusts Howley, and he's afraid of getting more coaches for fear of the authorities suspecting something.

JERRY. It's in my mind that that empty coach had something to do with Howley. Come on, Jim, we'll ramble down to the bridge and ask the driver.

They go out. Three men come up the lane and pass into the Depot. There is a pause, then a sound of altercation behind MARTIN. FELIX ROURKE comes out followed and almost pushed by PETER FLYNN, who is in uniform.

PETER (*roughly*). Go on, now. Do as I tell you.

FELIX (*in a whining Dublin voice*). Sure, Peter, it isn't in my power to coerce them like that.

PETER. It is so. Go on and do it.

FELIX. My brother, John, wouldn't hear of it.

PETER. Faith, he'll have to.

FELIX. Look, Martin, will you tell Peter how unreasonable he is?

MARTIN. I don't know what you're argufying about.

PETER. There's a crowd of our men over at his brother's public-house, they've no business there, 'tis here they should be, this is the meeting place. All I'm asking him and his brother John to do is to turn them out and make them come over here.

FELIX. You know yourself, Martin, 'tisn't my province to disturb honest men when they're having a little refreshment

PETER. Refreshment? And is this a night to be having refreshment? You and your province! If you and your brother are half the patriots you pretend to be you'd shut down your bar to-night.

FELIX. I'm as good a friend to Mister Emmet as you, Peter Flynn.

PETER. Are you? Why are you ashamed to put on your uniform so?

FELIX. I'm not ashamed.

PETER. You are.

MARTIN. For God's sake be quiet.

FELIX. Sure the public-house is only a few yards from here. The very minute the signal comes they'll be out in the street along with the rest of you—the very minute.

PETER. Ay, will they?

FELIX. Sure aren't a lot of the leaders over drinking at John Hevey's and Mrs. Dillon's? Can you expect the men to be different from the leaders?

PETER. Faith, I'll go over to your brother's place, and to Mrs. Dillon too, and if I don't raise a blister on some of those fellows—

He is going. FELIX runs after him.

The Dreamers

FELIX. Oh, Peter, don't make a row. John wouldn't like the shop to get a bad name, my sister-in-law will have your life if you go interfering with the customers. Yerra, Peter. (*They go out.*)

A man comes in from the opposite direction.

MAN. Is he inside yet?

MARTIN. Mister Emmet? He is.

MAN. I've a couple of old pistols here, I don't know would he have any use for them.

MARTIN. Are you selling them?

MAN. Selling? I'm giving him them, and I only wish 'twas a couple of cannon they were.

MARTIN. He'll be very thankful. I'll bring you to him. Tell me, you didn't see any coaches coming from Essex Bridge.

MAN. Coaches? No. But I came the other way.

MARTIN. Come on so. (*They go in.*)

Two rather villainous-looking men come up the lane.

They stop and look at the door.

1ST MAN. I think this is the place.

2ND MAN. Ay, that's it.

1ST MAN. Will we go inside?

2ND MAN. We will not. We'll wait here in the shadow.

They are moving into the shadow when a third man comes in.

1ST MAN. Jasus! There's Larry!

LARRY (as villainous-looking and with a Cork accent).

Yerra, Mickey, my boy, what are you doing here?

1ST MAN (MICKEY). Ah, having a stroll, same as yourself.

LARRY. I thought—maybe—(*he pauses*). I heard a whisper there might be hot work to-night. You—you're not with them are you? (*He jerks his bead towards the door.*)

MICKEY (going off into a cackle of shrill laughter). Me! Listen to him, Con! I'm surprised at you Larry to think

that me and me friend, Cornelius Driscoll, would have anything to do with such a low set of traitors. Me, that's all for law and authority! Sure I—

LARRY. Yerra, stop your joking, Mike. We all know the great friends you are with the law. Free lodgings and food in Kilmainham, no less! Tell us, boy, is there anything on to-night?

MICKEY. What do you mean?

LARRY. You know very well what I mean. If there is you won't refuse to tell a friend. Sure I haven't had a bit these two days only a few crusts. I had the divil's own luck this morning—grabbing a bit of meat in the market and getting instead the divil of a welt of a stick.

CON. Bedad, you're looking poorly enough.

MICKEY. Con and I are just waiting about. Maybe there'll be a little excitement in Thomas Street to-night and maybe there won't. If there is—well, there's always a few pickings when there's a row on.

LARRY. Oh, bedad, there is.

CON. Have you a stout stick?

LARRY. What for?

CON. The shop windows, you omadhaun.

LARRY. I have not. I'll get one. Oh, Jasus, let me get one welt at the windows of Mrs. Dillon's public-house.

MICKEY. Don't mind them. There's a nice little jeweller's shop up the street, that's what we've our eyes on. After we're inside it for five minutes sure we can buy up Mrs. Dillon's shop the same as a gentleman.

LARRY. Where the bloody hell will I get a stick?

CON. Cant you go inside. They'll give you a pike—or maybe a blunderbuss.

LARRY. In earnest?

CON. To be sure.

LARRY. But won't I have to say who I am, or something?

CON. Yerra no. Mention Mister Emmet's name.

The Dreamers

MICKEY. Whisht ! Here's the young lad out again. Go in now, Larry.

Martin comes out again. He looks up and down the lane. There is a little whisper and a scuffle in the shadow.

MARTIN (*sharply*). What's that ? Who's there ?

LARRY (*coming forward*). 'Tis only me, sir.

MARTIN. Oh, do you want anyone ?

LARRY. Well, if I might be so bold—I'm a true friend, sir, but I've nothing in me hand, sir, not even a stick.

MARTIN. What do you want ?

LARRY. Some little thing, sir, to break—I mean to strike a blow for Ireland.

MARTIN. Who are you ? I don't know you ?

LARRY. Oh, you wouldn't, sir, I'm only a poor man. But Mister—er—would remember me.

MARTIN. Mister ? Mister who ?

CON (*in a whisper, prompting him*). Emmet.

LARRY. Mister Emmet, sir.

MARTIN. Well, go inside. Straight along the passage.

LARRY. Thank you, sir. (*He goes in.*)

TRENAGHAN (*coming out*). I fear 'tis no use.

MARTIN. What at all can have happened the coaches ?

TRENAGHAN. Sure even if they come there's not more than seventy or eighty men inside and hardly one of the leaders there, except Mister Emmet.

MARTIN. They're over at Hevey's, I believe.

TRENAGHAN. Ah, bad manners to them. What do they want there ?

MARTIN. And there's more at Rourke's and Mrs. Dillon's and the other drinking places.

TRENAGHAN. You'd think 'twas a pleasure party they were on. My God, it's a damned shame ! I'd rather they were traitors. I'd rather they'd sold the plans to the Castle than that they'd fail Mister Emmet like this. He's a grand leader. If the men had half the spirit the boys had five years ago we'd carry all before us.

MARTIN. His spirits are low now, I suppose ?

TRENAGHAN. You wouldn't say so to look at him. He's in the room beyond talking to all the men as cool and as calm as if everything wasn't going against him. He's a grand way with the men. While he's talking to them there's not one that wouldn't venture their lives for him.

Two men come out of the Depot.

TRENAGHAN. Where are you off to, men ?

1ST MAN (*roughly*). What's that to you ?

2ND MAN Hush (*to TRENAGHAN*). 'Tis too hot within, we're just dropping across to Rourke's for a wet.

TRENAGHAN. I've no doubt anywhere there's fighting would be too hot for you.

1ST MAN. Let me tell you—

2ND MAN. Hush ! Come on away. (*They go out.*)

TRENAGHAN. That's the way he's served. It's a damned shame.

Two girls come up the lane, one from either side.

KATE. Yerra, Mary, is that yourself ?

MARY (*very agitated*). Oh, Kate, woman !

KATE. What is it, girl ? You're all of a tremble.

MARY. Oh, my God, the heart's after being put across me !

KATE. How so ?

MARY. You know yourself if there's one thing in the world I can't stand 'tis the noise of a gun—maybe 'tis because me father was a soldier—and to-night—oh, my, my, —

KATE. And what happened you to-night ?

MARY. I had gone across to Mrs. Foley's with a little handful of washing, and at the foot of the street, just after I coming over the bridge, there was a soldier and a countryman fighting. I was in dread to pass, I thought maybe I'd get a blow—and then a coach came up and out of the coach—will you believe me—who should get but Henry Howley ! You know Henry, Kate ? I was just going to say "Yerra, Henry, what are you doing in a coach," when he drew a pistol and—will you believe

me, Kate—he fired it off right in me ear at the soldier. Well, I let off one screech, and only Mrs. Clancy was at her door and drew me in I'd have been killed dead, for there was a rush of the guard and the soldier after Howley and the coach was left there in the middle of the street. Oh, Kate, come home with me, I'm in dread.

KATE. I will, to be sure. But, whisper—

TRENAGHAN. Are you sure it was Howley was in the coach.

MARY. Oh! You gave me a start! Of course it was Henry Howley, I know him well. Sure me mother and his mother—

TRENAGHAN. Where did he go to?

MARY. I don't know in God's name. He made off full tilt along the quays. Come on, Kate.

They go out.

TRENAGHAN. That's the end of Howley.

MARTIN. His hot temper betrayed him. He wouldn't see the countryman beaten by the soldiers.

TRENAGHAN. And by saving that man look at all he's got beaten to-night . . . We must tell Mister Emmet.

MARTIN. I can't bring myself to do it. 'Tis the last blow.

TRENAGHAN. We must. Oh, its a shame, a blasted shame.

EMMET (*in full uniform who is in the doorway behind them*). What is the shame, Trenaghan?

TRENAGHAN. Oh, Mister Emmet. We have just had news of Howley, sir.

EMMET. Yes. Is he here? We are ready.

TRENAGHAN. No, sir. He's fled.

EMMET. Fled? Oh no. Howley was true. He wouldn't fly—he was no coward.

TRENAGHAN. If he had been more of a coward it would have been beter. He was coming over the bridge in the first coach when he saw a fight going on in the street between a soldier and a countryman: he interfered on the countryman's behalf and fired a pistol, and the

watch coming up he fled leaving the coach standing in the street.

EMMET. Good God ! One misfortune after another ! We will get fresh coaches. Quick ! You, Trenaghan, go out this way and fetch two : you, Martin, that way, and fetch one. As long as the Castle gates are open all is not lost.

MARTIN. Right, sir. (*He is going.*)

EMMET. Or wait. Go instead to the Wexford men—you know where they are—tell them we are delayed, but to hold themselves in readiness. I will send Robert for the other coaches.

MARTIN. Very well, sir. (*He is going out when Quigley rushes in.*)

QUIGLEY. We are all lost ! The army is coming on us !

EMMET. Is it ? Then we'll die fighting in the street, they'll not catch us cooped up like rats in a trap. Stay with me, Martin, I want every man I have.

He goes into the Depot followed by Martin, Trenaghan and Quigley. There is a noise from the Depot of many voices, some shouting, some cheering. when Larry appears in the doorway.

LARRY. Mickey ! Con ! Are ye there ?

CON (*coming out of the shadow*). We're here, boy, we're here.

LARRY. I have it. Look ! (*he shows a pike.*) That'll do good work.

MICKEY. You're all right, now. Are they coming out ?

LARRY. They are so. The young fellow in the uniform has called on them to come out.

MICKEY. We'll let them go on in front. Our place is at the rear. Mind, break the lamps first. We can do our work better in the dark.

CON. Trust me, boy. Whisht ! here they are ! (*They draw back into the shadow.*)

EMMET *appears in the doorway. He stands there for an instant. Behind him in the passage the men crowd.*

EMMET. Come on, men !

He draws his sword, the men surge after him.

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.—*The same room as in the first scene of the act.* HANNAY, MULLIGAN and PETER FREYNE are still there. HANNAY is sober, the other two are slightly drunk. The room is quite full of men drinking, talking, smoking. When the curtain rises almost everybody is talking at once, and for half a minute there is a babble of undistinguishable conversation. It is nine o'clock on the evening of July 23rd.

HANNAY. It's what I said myself to Mister Emmet, I wouldn't trust my life to them.

PHILIPS. I don't understand such things myself, but them cannons look good weapons.

HANNAY. Cannons ! Moyah ! Bits of an old tree hollowed out, do you mean ? I tell you what, Jackeen, I'd rather be in front of them than behind them when they're fired off.

PHILIPS. What d'ye mean ?

HANNAY. Mean ? I mean they're damned ugly, dangerous things, and 'tis as likely they'd kill the men behind as the men in front.

A SHRILL VOICE. I told him up to his puss I could feed a horse as good as himself.

ANOTHER VOICE. True for you.

A SMALL CLEAR VOICE. The time of the last rising my a'nt had a dream—

MULLIGAN (*shouting across the room*). For God's sake get us something to drink. Mangan, screech down to Julia.

PHILIPS. 'Tis all right for young fellows to be going about with pikes and the like, but I'm a settled man with a wife and family.

A MEAN-LOOKING MAN. In course, 'tisn't to be expected of you.

FREYNE (*loudly, rather drunk*). I'm as ready as anyone to strike a blow when the time comes. Did anyone say I was afraid ?

VOICES. Yerra no. Quite yourself, man, quite yourself.

THE SHRILL VOICE. "Ye old naygur," says he, "the horse is blind of an eye." "No more than yourself," says I, and with that—

MULLIGAN. Mangan, *will* you screech down to Julia ?

THE SMALL CLEAR VOICE. Will you believe this, Mister Mangan, the time of the last rising my a'nt had a dream—

MANGAN. Ah, bad luck to your a'nt and her dream, let me get to the door—

THE SMALL CLEAR VOICE. But she h ad, I'm telling you.

MANGAN (*opening the door*). Julia ! Julia !

An unseen man in the background begins to sing a song.

VOICES. Stop ! Be quiet ! Whisht !

OTHER VOICES. Go on, Jimmy. Raise it, don't be daunted.

THE SHRILL VOICE. He offered me twenty pounds for the horse. "To hell with you and your twenty pounds," says I. Wasn't I right. Wasn't I, wasn't I ?

ANOTHER VOICE. To be sure, to be sure.

VOICE IN THE BACKGROUND. Give us "The Lass of Richmond Hill," Jimmy.

The speaker tries to sing it, but fails.

HANNAY. Ay, McNally. He's the grand man.

MULLIGAN. Did you call Julia ?

MANGAN. Didn't you hear me ?

FREYNE. I'd fight Sirr and his troops with nothing but a stick in my hand. Is there any man says I wouldn't ?

VOICES (*to the songster*). Go on Jimmy. How shy you are !

Mrs. Dillon, the proprietress of the public-house, comes in.

MRS. DILLON. Did you call ?

MULLIGAN. Good woman, Mrs. Dillon. Bring Mr. Mangan and myself the same again.

MRS. DILLON. Very well so. (*She is going.*)

HANNAY. Any sign of Mister Emmet, ma'am?

MRS. DILLON. Indeed I hadn't a chance to look out. The shop's full of customers. Me and Julia are run off our feet trying to get them all served.

MULLIGAN. Hurry up with the liquor.

MRS. DILLON. 'Twill be with you in a minute. (*She goes.*)

HANNAY. Ah, he'll have sense enough not to try anything to-night.

PHILIPS. Is it the truth that Mac. was given sixty guineas to-night to buy arms and hasn't been seen or heard of since?

HANNAY. Mangan says 'twas a hundred guineas.

PHILIPS. Mister Emmet's a fool to trust Mac. with money.

THE MEAN-LOOKING MAN. He's a grand young man all the same. But sure I always had a wish for the whole family. Old Doctor Emmet was a grand man and a great friend of mine. I was talking to him not two months before he died, not two months.

A VOICE. And he left the horse after him, did he?

THE SHRILL VOICE. He did to be sure. But look here—

PETER FLYNN comes in.

PETER (*loudly*). Are there any of Mister Emmet's friends here?

VOICES. Ay, we're all friends. What do you want?

PETER. You're wanted below in the Depot.

HANNAY. We're doing all right where we are.

PETER. You are not. It's in the Depot you're to assemble. Don't you know that?

HANNAY. I know as much as you do and maybe a trifle more.

PETER. Come on so.

HANNAY. We're doing all right where we are.

PETER. You are not. Is it afraid you are ?

FREYNE. Who's afraid ? D'ye think I'm afraid ?

PETER. You can't see the signal here.

HANNAY. They'll pass within a stone's throw of the window. We'll join you never fear.

PETER. The orders are to assemble at the Depot.

MANGAN. Orders ! Moyah ! Whose orders ?

PETER. Emmet's.

MANGAN. What right has he to order us ?

PHILIPS. Aren't we men the same as he ?

MANGAN. Ay, and a deal older than him for the matter of that.

A VOICE. That's so.

A VOICE (*very drunk singing*). "I'd crowns resign to call her mine, the Lass of Richmond Hill."

MULLIGAN. Is Mrs. Dillon coming with the drink ?

PETER. Is this a night for drinking ?

MULLIGAN. Sure every night's a night for drinking.

THE SMALL CLEAR VOICE. Peter, I was just telling my friend here that the time of the last rising my a'nt dreamt that she saw—

MRS. DILLON (*entering with a tray behind PETER, who is standing in the doorway*). I beg your pardon, sir.

A cheer is heard from the street.

PETER. There ! They're off ! Are you coming, men ?

VOICES. What's that ? Is he out ? Yerra no. I tell you he is. Look out the window, Mike. Can you see anything ?

MIKE (*at window*). It's Emmet sure enough. He's his sword drawn. There's a crowd after him.

MRS. DILLON (*trying to pass*). I beg your pardon, sir.

PETER. Are you coming ?

HANNAY. How many has he with him ?

MIKE. Not many. And there's all the rabble of the town joining on.

HANNAY. Go on yourself, Peter. 'Tis better for us to hold ourselves in reserve, I think. (*Murmurs of approval*).

PETER. You damned cowards.

FREYNE (*starting up*). I'll allow no man to call me a coward. (*He is pulled back by his friends*.)

MRS. DILLON. Will you let me pass with the drink?

MULLIGAN. For God's sake stand aside and let Mrs. Dillon in with the drink. We're parched while you're standing blathering there.

PETER (*turns and sees Mrs. Dillon with the tray in her hand. He takes it from her*). Who wants a drink?

The whole room roars at him.

PETER (*throwing the tray, glasses and drink into the middle of them*). There you are then.

Confusion, curses, Peter goes out.

MRS. DILLON. Oh, wirra, wirra, who's to pay for the broken glass?

FREYNE. I'll let no man call me a coward. (*He staggers truculently out*.)

MULLIGAN. It's a damned shame wasting good liquor like that.

A crash of glass is heard.

MIKE (*running and looking out of the window*). Oh, Mrs. Dillon, ma'am, a tramp is after putting a pike through the shop window. They're going to loot the shop!

MRS. DILLON. What's that you say? Virgin! That's what comes of your risings! Decent people have to suffer for them—the windows broke! Oh, wirra, wirra.

She rushes from the room.

THE MEAN-LOOKING MAN. We're safer within, I think.

PHILIPS. We are, to be sure.

THE MEAN-LOOKING MAN. There's nasty characters abroad to-night.

HANNAY (*to MIKE at the window*). Tell us if you see anything strange.

THE SHRILL VOICE. But I'm damned if I won't take that horse to Kildare fair next week and—

JIMMY begins to sing a song in Gaelic.

VOICES. Good man ! Rise it, boy !

THE SMALL CLEAR VOICE. I never knew my a'nt's dreams to fail yet.

MANGAN (*crossing to the door*) Julia ! Julia !

The talk breaks out again all over the room. Outside there is noise and shoutling.

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

A month later—on the afternoon of August 25th—EMMET is sitting writing at a table in MRS. PALMER's house at Harold's Cross. He still wears the boots and breeches of his uniform, but has a plain coat.

The room is comfortably furnished, another table covered with a white cloth is prepared for his dinner. There is a bed in one corner of the room, on it lies MARTIN BRADY.

JOHN BRADY comes in followed by Mrs. Palmer, a pleasant-looking, middle-aged woman. JOHN stands at the foot of the bed looking at MARTIN.

MRS. PALMER. You see, Mister Brady, there's not a stir out of him. He's been that way since yesterday morning.

JOHN. Ay.

MRS. PALMER. Mister Emmet—Mister Hewitt I should say—dressed the wound in his side this morning, but he never moved.

JOHN. Ay.

EMMET. I think it must be that small wound on the top of the head, John, that we thought so lightly of. Maybe something is pressing on the brain and that brings about this stupor. If he doesn't rouse before evening we will get the doctor in again, be the risk what it may.

JOHN looks at him sombrely, but makes no answer.

MRS. PALMER (to JOHN). Maybe if you called to him he'd wake. 'Tisn't natural for him to be lying there like that.

JOHN (kneeling by the bed). Martin! Martin boy! . . . Martin! . . . It's no use. (He gets up.)

MRS. PALMER. You try, Mister Emmet. God knows if he'd wake for anyone he'd wake for you.

JOHN (*roughly*). Ay, he's come to your bidding often enough. you've brought him to the edge of death, you ought to be able to whistle him back.

EMMET (*lays down his pen and comes to the bed. He kneels down and takes MARTIN's hand*). Martin !

MRS. PALMER. Wasn't there like a flutter of his eyes ?

EMMET. Martin !

MRS. PALMER. There's a little stir, I think, as if he was struggling to come back.

EMMET. John, I don't think it's well to force him to rouse himself. Maybe while he's sleeping he's gathering up new strength. See, he's quite sunk back into stupor again. We should leave him alone I think.

JOHN. I've no doubt you're right. (*He tries to put a clumsy sarcasm into the words. EMMET goes back to the table.*)

JOHN. I'll be over at my house, ma'am. If he should rouse himself or—or—you could send over the little girl for me.

MRS. PALMER. To be sure. I have it in my mind that this sleep is the best medicine he could have. The wound, anyway, is healing in a wonder. Good evening to you.

JOHN goes.

MRS. PALMER. I'm sure you won't take up anything he says, sir. Martin was always like his own child to him, and after losing his wife and poor Robert getting killed in the riot he's in dread he'll lose Martin too.

EMMET. Indeed, Mrs. Palmer, no one blames him less than I do. (*MRS. PALMER is going.*) Oh, Mrs. Palmer, when those ladies come I will see them in this room. It isn't safe I think to go into your parlour. They won't mind the sick boy.

MRS. PALMER. Very well, sir, I'll bring them in here. Will they ask for you as Mister Hewitt or as Mister Emmet ?

EMMET. I do not know. But they are the only visitors I'm expecting this evening.

A CHILD'S VOICE (*outside*). Mother !

The Dreamers

MRS. PALMER (*putting her head out of the door*). What is it, Ellen?

CHILD'S VOICE. You're wanted.

MRS. PALMER (*to EMMET*). These'll maybe be the ladies, sir. (*She goes.*)

EMMET *goes to the bed, looks at MARTIN, kneels by him, pushes the hair back from his forehead, sighs, stands up and goes back to the table and begins looking over what he has written. Voices are heard outside the door. He lays the paper he has been reading on a chair. SARAH CURRAN and JANE CURRAN come in.*

EMMET. Sarah! My dear! (*They clasp hands.*)

JANE (*to cover their emotion*). We thought you weren't here after all. On the paper on the gate was only the name of Mrs. Palmer and little Ellen. We thought you lodged here under the name of Hewitt. Faith, if the authorities find out Mrs. Palmer has a lodger and his name not on the list they'll make trouble.

EMMET. How have you been? Anxious for me I fear.

SARAH. No, no. Just a little. But to know you were safe, that was everything.

EMMET. I cannot thank you enough for coming to see me to-day. It's madly dangerous, but I couldn't live without seeing you—

SARAH. We are in no danger. At any rate it was necessary to speak to you. Jane has a plan.

EMMET. How pale you are. Oh Sarah!

SARAH. Nonsense, I am quite well. Jane will tell you so.

EMMET. Your letters were so bright and gay. Sometimes I wondered if—(*she looks at him*)—No, no, Sarah, I never doubted you. I was thankful that you could smile at my misfortunes. Now I see it was only to keep up my spirits you disguised your own.

SARAH. My letters cheered you then?

EMMET. I have them here (*touching his coat*). Never a day passes without my reading them.

JANE. Oh, Robert, you shouldn't keep them. 'Tis unsafe.

EMMET. I know, Jane, I promised her I would destroy them. And I will—but not yet. And mine?

SARAH. I cannot bring myself to part with them.

EMMET. You see, Jane!

JANE. It isn't safe. No, no, it isn't.

SARAH. And you found what I left for you in your coat?

EMMET. It's here. Sewed into my cravat. I sewed it myself. But sit down. Let me take this basket from you.

SARAH. There are a few Eve-apples in it. I remembered you liked them.

EMMET. Eve-apples . . . Yes. . . . Do you remember that summer evening—

SARAH. You climbed the tree and threw them down to me.

EMMET. Yes, and you held out your apron for them. I can see you in the glow of the setting sun standing looking up at me and your apron full of red and yellow apples.

SARAH. I was little more than a child.

EMMET. Perhaps so. But, oh Sarah, even then, even then—

SARAH. I know, dear Robert. How long ago it is. And yet when I was gathering these to-day the tree seemed not to have changed a leaf, yet I'm a grown woman and you're—

EMMET. An outlaw, and if you told the Government where I am hidden they would throw a thousand golden pounds into your apron . . . Tell me, your father—McNally—do they suspect anything?

SARAH. I am sure my father does not. Mister McNally, I am not so sure.

JANE. I urged Sarah to take him into our confidence. He has such power, he would help you to escape.

EMMET. I do not wish to escape.

JANE. But, Robert, you must. You are in daily, hourly, peril. Do you know that every day Sirr and his soldiers are arresting men, they are searching houses that

are only faintly suspected of harbouring rebels and seizing any suspicious personages. Suppose they come to Mrs. Palmer's—

EMMET. They would not find me.

JANE (*impatiently*). You have an invisible cap, maybe.

EMMET (*rising*). I have this. (*He removes a skirting board and shows a hollowed-out recess.*)

SARAH. Oh Robert ! How clever ! But is there really room in there for a man ?

EMMET. Yes.

SARAH. Did you guess that you would be forced to hide there ?

EMMET. It is as well to be prepared. There are half a dozen houses in Dublin prepared like this. They have saved many men from being taken.

SARAH. I am so thankful to know that you are safe. (*She sees MARTIN*) Oh !

EMMET. I must ask your pardon for bringing you into this room. It was the safest—but I do not think you will mind. 'Tis poor Martin Brady.

SARAH. Martin ! I heard he was wounded. (*She goes near the bed*) Oh poor Martin ! Is he very sick, Robert ?

EMMET. He has been. But now he is getting better, I think—I am sure of it.

SARAH. Is it true that Robert was killed in Thomas Street ?

EMMET. Yes.

JANE (*violently*). Those soldiers ! They are brutal—merciless !

EMMET. Alas, Jane, he wasn't killed by a soldier. He was trying to protect unfortunate Kilwarden and one of the insurgents—no, one of the mob, for I deny that those pillagers and murderers were followers of mine—stabbed him with a pike. Martin, poor boy, got a gunshot wound in the side and a blow on the head during an attack on the barracks in James's Street. The odds were twenty to one, they hadn't a chance.

SARAH. He didn't fail you. Oh, Robert, in the middle of all your misfortunes and defeat that personal devotion must comfort and strengthen you.

EMMET (*bitterly*). And I have rewarded his devotion thus !

SARAH. Robert !

JANE. That is not like you.

EMMET. Sarah, Jane, when I think of it—I feel crazed. This boy, Robert Brady—Kilwarden—Kilwarden ! the most righteous judge in Ireland slaughtered in the street like a pig. That's what I didn't understand—the suffering of the innocent—I shrank from no sacrifice myself—but Martin, he'd have done anything for me, and I sent him to his death because I thought, I dreamed—Sarah, Sarah, tell me, was there anything in it but a boy's romantic dream ?

SARAH. There was everything in it, Robert. Truth freedom, justice.

EMMET (*more calmly*). Yes, yes, of course there was. But, you know, in the street, when the rabble behind me began to loot and murder, oh Sarah, truth and justice seemed very far away. All was so different to what I had expected. If I could have died then, sword in hand—

JANE. Ireland has lost enough without losing you, Robert. Please God you've been spared to wipe out and atone for that unfortunate night's work

EMMET. Ah, if I only could ! If now I were to disappear for ever I know how lightly men without candour will pronounce on this failure without knowing one of the circumstances that occasioned it : they will consider only that they predicted it. They will make no compromise [of errors, they will not recollect that they predicted also that no preparations could be made—that no plan could be conceived—that no day could be fixed without being instantly known to the Castle. All this I did, but they will never be just enough to acknowledge it. Oh, if I were to die to-morrow all I would ask from the world would be the charity of its silence.

SARAH. But 'tis your safety we must think of now. That is why we ventured so much to see you to-day. Jane has a plan——

EMMET. I cannot leave Ireland.

JANE. But why? Why?

EMMET. Would you have me secure my own safety while my followers are being apprehended, are suffering (*he indicates MARTIN*) are—perhaps—dying?

SARAH. You cannot save them.

EMMET. I believe I can. I am even now engaged in writing to the Government pointing out how foolish and useless these arrests are, how without deterring one conspirator they are only exposing the ignorance of the authorities with regard to the rebellion.

SARAH. Well, having written it and sent it to the Government will you consent to fly? . . . Your plan has failed. Nothing further can be attempted.

EMMET. Ah! You think so? But what after all has happened? Dublin has failed me; I do not deny it. It failed me through incompetence, through disobedience. There are some excuses for it—the thing was too hurried at the end. Had I another week—had I one thousand pounds—had I one thousand men, I would have succeeded. There was redundancy enough in one part to have made up, if complete, for deficiency in the rest; but there was failure in all—plan, preparation and men. . . . But if Dublin has failed the country has not failed. It is as ready to rise as ever it was. Last week I was in Wicklow. Dwyer is only waiting for the word. The Kildare men have repented bitterly of their desertion: they are eager for the chance of retrieving their good name. At any moment we may hear that the French have landed.

SARAH. I believe they will never come to Ireland again.

EMMET. No, not to Ireland. But they will come to England. 'Tis no imaginary peril. I have certain information that persons in high authority in England

are in daily—hourly—expectation of the news of their landing. Once they land the spell of England's supremacy is broken. Ireland will rise to a certainty. We must be ready and waiting for that moment. Would it not be madness, would it not be cowardice to lose heart because of the failure last month ?

SARAH. But 'tis yourself—your safety—

EMMET (*not heeding her*). When the history of the emancipation of Ireland is written, what will the historian have to say concerning the 23rd of July, save that a handful of men rioted in the streets of Dublin, that a few were killed, a few imprisoned, some arms captured. Can we allow that historian to add that the leaders—so full of brave words before—fled the country after this abortive rising ? No. Never.

JANE. What an optimist you always were, Robert !

EMMET. Ay, I thank God for it. I thank God for having giving me a sanguine disposition. But this is more than a mood ; I have grounds for it. Hidden though I am, never a day passes that I do not see agents and leaders from all parts of the country. You think they come full of fears, speaking of failure and bidding me fly ? Not at all ; they are full of plans for the future, pleading to be allowed to strike at once. Oh Sarah, failure seems to be the only thing that opens some Irishmen's hearts to you ! If I had been as well supported before the rising as I have been since, I would not be an outlaw and in hiding to-day.

SARAH. But outlawed and in hiding as you are, you are almost powerless. You cannot do any good work in Ireland. You are too well known, you are bound to be caught. 'Tis only reckless folly—go to France or to America—there you would be safe. We have news of a ship—

EMMET. And leave you behind ?

SARAH. I—

JANE (*who has been watching MARTIN*). Hush ! Robert, he is stirring I think.

EMMET goes over to the bed and kneels by it.

EMMET. Yes, he is stirring.

MARTIN. Ah ! (Opening his eyes and speaking in a thin, clear voice.) You were calling me sir. Here I am.

EMMET. My dear Martin.

MARTIN (realising he is in bed). Why, where am I ?

EMMET. You are safe, Martin.

MARTIN. Have I been asleep ?

EMMET. You were wounded, don't you remember ?

MARTIN. Of course. . . . Yes, I was wounded and sick.

SARAH. But you are going to get better.

MARTIN. Miss Curran ! Yes, I feel I am much better.

EMMET. That's good news.

MARTIN. Where is Robert, where is John ?

EMMET. John was here a few minutes ago. I will send a message for him. He will be glad to know you have awakened. (To JANE.) Tell Mrs. Palmer. (JANE goes out.) It will weary you to talk, Martin, you must keep your strength to get well quickly.

MARTIN. Yes, sir. But I feel so strong and well. I'm hungry. I'm thirsty.

SARAH. Drink a little of this milk, Martin.

MARTIN. Thank you.

EMMET. Shall I rise your head ?

MARTIN. Lift me up, sir.

EMMET lifts him up till he is sitting in bed supported by EMMET's arm. SARAH holds a cup of milk to his mouth. He tries to drink.

MARTIN. How strange. I don't seem to be able to swallow it. I'm not hungry any longer now. (He leans his head against EMMET's shoulder and there is silence for a moment) . . . I had a dream, a grand, wonderful dream.

SARAH. Don't talk, Martin, try and sleep.

MARTIN. A grand, wonderful dream. I dreamed that you were King of Ireland.

EMMET. I, Martin ?

MARTIN. No other one, sir. You will be King, won't you?

EMMET. If I am, you shall be one of my generals.

MARTIN. No. I will be the King's bootmaker.

(*Silence. JOHN comes in followed by JANE and MRS. PALMER.*)

EMMET. Here is John, now, Martin.

JOHN. Martin! Martin boy!

MARTIN. I am much better, John. I am going to get well, and Mister Emmet is going to be King and I—
(*his voice trails off*).

JOHN (*to SARAH*). He's better?

SARAH. Yes.

MARTIN. Miss Sarah, the coach—that day—we never got it for you—

SARAH. It didn't matter.

MARTIN. What did I say I would be?

EMMET. Hush, try to sleep.

MARTIN. No, no, I am quite well. What did I dream? I was—you were King—and I—I—I have forgotten even my dream.

EMMET. You dreamed you were my—

MARTIN. Yes, yes.

EMMET. My bootmaker.

MARTIN. Ay, that was it. . . . It was a grand dream. . . . They were good boots. . . . I put the best work and the best leather into them. . . . the King's bootmaker . . . even John said they were good boots . . . even John . . . dreams. . . .

A pause.

SARAH. He has gone to sleep again, I think. Lay him down gently, Robert, without waking him if you can.

EMMET (*lays him down and says quite simply*). He is dead.

SARAH. Dead! Oh, Robert!

EMMET *goes and sits at the table, his head buried in his hands.*

SARAH. Martin! . . . Martin! . . . I fear John—

JOHN (*standing up*). Ay, he's dead. Dead. Well, Mister Emmet, I hope you're satisfied. You have us all now. Mary and Robert and Martin. All. All except me. Maybe you'll have a use for me too. Maybe 'tisn't enough to have broken my heart, maybe you'd like to break my body too.

EMMET. If my death could bring them all back, I would die to-day, John.

JOHN. Ay, would you (*with sudden fury*). But maybe you will. Blood for blood; blood for blood; that innocent boy's blood is crying for vengeance the same as Abel's. If there's any justice with God you and your like will have to pay blood for blood. You'll pay—I see it in your eyes—very soon—in a crowd of people—drop for drop—the dogs lapping it up—like Ahab's—licking their lips—

SARAH (*with a scream*). John!

JOHN (*after a pause*). What was I saying? I'm sorry sir. There's no reason or justice in talking like that. But Martin—Martin was like my own child to me.

. . . He wouldn't wish you to pay. . . . he wouldn't have you die. . . . He died willing. Ah, sir, maybe there's something in it that I don't understand. Something good and true at the back of it all that makes them die gladly like this. (*He stoops and begins to wrap Martin in the bed clothes.*)

MRS. PALMER. What are you doing, John?

JOHN. He would never have betrayed Mister Emmet living, and I'm thinking he won't want to betray him and he dead.

MRS. PALMER. You're taking him away?

JOHN. Over at my own house it won't matter if all the soldiers in Ireland find him. Here 'twould be different.

EMMET (*standing up*). John, you mustn't. They will arrest you if they find the body. Let me take this risk, at least.

JOHN. I've been in prison before, sir, I'm not afraid. God knows I haven't much to live for now. No, Martin wouldn't have liked to be a danger to you.

He stands up with the boy in his arms.

JANE. Can you carry him?

JOHN. I've carried him often enough when he was a babby, miss, and when he was a boy and hurt his ankle I carried him: ay, I can carry him now and he dead.

He goes out followed by MRS. PALMER.

EMMET. Poor John Brady. (*He sees SARAH crying.*) Sarah, my dear, what is it? Don't cry. 'Tisn't for Martin we should weep. He would ask no different death.

SARAH. 'Tisn't for him I weep, it's for yourself. You heard John's awful words. They terrified me. They say he sees things—knows what is about to happen—if it should be a true prophecy! Oh, Robert, you must fly the country, you must—at once—

EMMET. Hush, hush! Putting aside all other things I could never leave you behind me in Ireland.

SARAH. When things have settled I would join you.

EMMET. Your father would never consent to it. No no. I won't leave Ireland, Sarah, till I leave it together with my wife.

SARAH. Then—who knows—perhaps we might manage—we might be married secretly—

EMMET. Sarah, do you mean that?

SARAH. Yes, yes, why not? If you are so reckless—but, Robert, listen. We have news of a ship—Jane heard last night that—

JANE (*at the window*). Robert, there are three soldiers on the road.

EMMET. What? Soldiers? (*He springs to the window.*) Yes. They seem to be guarding the road. Perhaps they mean to search the house. (*He goes to the door and listens.*) There is a man's voice speaking to Mrs. Palmer. Quick. You hide in here—in my bedroom.

SARAH. But—Robert—

EMMET. There is no time—I will hide in the hole.

Jane, I trust to you, I implore of you not to let her come out whatever happens. Sarah, you understand, 'twould mean your ruin and do me no good.

SARAH. I understand, Robert.

EMMET. Quick, quick.

They go into the inner room. He shuts the door and is stooping down to go into the hole when he hears steps and voices outside the door.

EMMET. Too late!

He very quickly sits down to the table as if he were going to eat.

MAJOR SIRR comes in followed by a soldier and MRS. PALMER.

SIRR (to MRS. PALMER). Wait in the next room, ma'am. (MRS. PALMER goes out.)

SIRR. What is your name, sir?

EMMET. Cunningham.

SIRR. Ah! (He looks round the room and sees EMMET's manuscript to the government lying on a chair. He takes it glances at it and puts it into his pocket.) Watch him Jones. I will examine Mrs. Palmer.

He goes out. JONES approaches EMMET who at once knocks him down with a pistol and attempts to escape. But the man, who is big and powerful, closes with him and overcomes him and gets the pistol from him. The struggle takes place in silence.

SIRR (coming back). Ah, has he given you trouble?

JONES. Tried to knock me down with his pistol, sir.

SIRR. This woman—Mrs. Palmer—says your name is Hewitt. You assert it is Cunningham.

EMMET. Yes.

SIRR. Why does she call you Hewitt?

EMMET. I do not know.

SIRR. How long have you been here?

EMMET. I came this morning.

JONES has relaxed his vigilance and with a bound

EMMET reaches the window and is through it before either men can stop him. JONES follows him through the window, SIRR rushes through the door.

SIRR (*shouting*). Fire on him, men, don't let him escape.

A confused noise outside, shouting.

SARAH (*bursting out of the room followed by JANE who vainly tries to stop her*). No, no, I must. Oh, my God, what is happening? (*She rushes to the window.*)

JANE. Sarah, my love, don't let them see you.

SARAH. Where is he? I see no one. Ah yes, there—there. Oh look—Robert—the soldier—his musket— (*A shot is heard.*) Oh! (*She buries her face in her hands.*)

JANE. He is not struck. He is escaping.

SARAH. Yes, he's tripped the soldier.

JANE. He's reached the road.

SARAH. Ah, there's a whole line of soldiers sprung from the ditch.

JANE. He will burst through them.

SARAH. No, no, 'tis impossible.

JANE. They are surrounding him.

SARAH. He cannot escape now.

JANE. They are not fighting. He must have surrendered.

SARAH. Yes. Oh, Robert, Robert.

JANE. They are leading him back here.

SARAH. Here?

JANE. We must go into the room.

SARAH. No. I must stay. I will speak to him again.

JANE. Sarah! Are you mad?

SARAH. I must, Jane.

JANE. No, no, I won't let you. It must not be known that you are here. Robert said so himself—think of our father—if he knew anything of this—he would turn you out—

SARAH. I care nothing for that. I must speak to Robert again.

JANE. Sarah! for Robert's sake! He begged you not to show yourself. Can you do any good by staying? You will only add to his troubles and anxieties. Sarah, he has enough to bear without that.

SARAH. You are right, Jane. Come. (*They go into the room.*)

EMMET is led in between two soldiers. SIRR follows.
A couple of other soldiers stand near the door.

EMMET's face is bloody.

SIRR. I am sorry, sir, that we had to treat you with such roughness.

EMMET. Pray do not let it concern you. All is fair in war.

SIRR. You still maintain your name is Cunningham?

EMMET. Yes.

SIRR. Then we must search the horse farther. I have information that Mister Robert Emmet is hidden here. Jones, see what is behind that door. (*He points to the door of the room SARAH and JANE are in. JONES goes towards it.*)

EMMET. You need not. I am the only lodger in the house. Cunningham is not my name. My name is Emmet—Robert Emmet.

SIRR. Ah! I thought it must be, but I have never seen you, and the description I got of you is not exact enough to make me certain.

EMMET. You need search no further. I am the man you are looking for.

SIRR. Pardon me, if I search your person. (*He searches him, empties his pockets, and finds SARAH's letters.*) Ah, papers.

EMMET. Sir—those papers—they are merely letters—personal letters—they have no connection with the conspiracy, I ask you—as a gentleman to a gentleman—

SIRR. To destroy them? I cannot, Mister Emmet.

EMMET. I assure you they have no political value. They are the letters of—of a friend merely—

SIRR (*glancing at them, with a laugh*). A female friend I see!

EMMET (*in great distress*). I beg—I implore of you—

SIRR. Are you ready, we must be going. (*A pause.*)

EMMET. Major Sirr, would it be impossible—if I

asked you—to leave me alone in this room for five minutes, no, for three minutes—pledging my word not to try to escape or destroy any papers—or take my own life—

SIRR. It would be impossible, sir.

EMMET. Even if you have my word of honour?

SIRR (*with a laugh*). The word of an Irish rebel? No, no. Come, sir, we are losing time. (*He goes out.*)

The soldiers lead EMMET to the door. MRS. PALMER is there crying.

EMMET. Goodbye, Mrs. Palmer.

MRS. PALMER. Goodbye, sir. If I could do anything—

EMMET. Do anything? . . . Yes. You know I have a bird here—caged. I wanted a moment—I would have liked to see it again—

MRS. PALMER. A bird, sir?

EMMET. When I am gone let it go free, and when you do so tell it—tell it—that it can never understand how I loved it. I did hope—I did hope and dream that—

(*He pauses.*)

SIRR'S VOICE OUTSIDE. What the devil is keeping you?

The soldiers impatiently hurry him out. MRS. PALMER follows. A moment later JANE peeps in.

JANE. They have gone. You may come out, Sarah.

SARAH comes out walking as if in a dream.

JANE. Look, Sarah, you can see him from the window.

She draws her to the window. SARAH looks out.

JANE. Now he is gone. . . . Sarah, dear, we had better go. Maybe they'll be coming back to search through his papers, they must not find us here. . . . Let me put the cloak round you. . . . Why, you are trembling, my poor darling. . . . Come. (*She goes to the door, SARAH follows her. At the door JANE stops.*) The basket with the Eve-apples, we had better bring it.

SARAH takes it off the table. She lets it fall from her hand. The apples roll about the floor.

SARAH. Oh, Robert, Robert!

JANE (*putting her arms round her*). Don't, Sarah, don't My dear, you must control yourself—

SARAH. You heard what he said about the bird—about me? He said he hoped and dreamed—oh, Jane, and so did I, so did I.

JANE. Hush, hush. Please God, 'twill all end well. Ten years hence you and Robert will be smiling at the memory of all this.

SARAH. No, this is the end. If I ever see him again it will be on his way to the scaffold.

JANE. Come, dear. Come, Sarah.

She leads her out.

CURTAIN.

THE DREAMERS

This play was first performed at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, on the 10th February, 1915. It was produced by A. Patrick Wilson, with the following caste:—

| | | | | |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|--------------------|
| JOHN BRADY | ... | ... | ... | Arthur Sinclair |
| ROBERT BRADY | ... | ... | ... | A. Patrick Wilson |
| MARTIN BRADY | ... | ... | ... | U. Wright |
| ROBERT EMMET | ... | ... | ... | Fred. O'Donovan |
| LACEY | ... | ... | ... | Eric Gorman |
| SARAH CURRAN | ... | ... | ... | Sara Allgood |
| HENRY HOWLEY | ... | ... | ... | J. M. Kerrigan |
| THOMAS FREYNE | ... | ... | ... | James Smith |
| MCCARTNEY | ... | ... | ... | Sean Connolly |
| HANNAY | ... | ... | ... | H. E. Hutchinson |
| MORRISSEY | ... | ... | ... | J. M. Kerrigan |
| TRENAGHAN | ... | ... | ... | Philip Guiry |
| PETER FREYNE | ... | ... | ... | George St. John |
| ROCHE | ... | ... | ... | J. A. O'Rourke |
| MULLIGAN | ... | ... | ... | William Shields |
| JULIA | ... | ... | ... | Kathleen Drago |
| JERRY | ... | ... | ... | Tomas O'Neill |
| JIM | ... | ... | ... | J. F. Barlow |
| PETER FLYNN | ... | ... | ... | Sydney J. Morgan |
| FELIX ROURKE | } | ... | ... | J. M. Kerrigan |
| LARRY | | ... | ... | Sean Connolly |
| CON | ... | ... | ... | Michael Coniffe |
| MICKEY | ... | ... | ... | Shiela O'Sullivan |
| KATE | ... | ... | ... | Cathleen MacCarthy |
| MARY | ... | ... | ... | Eric Gorman |
| QUIGLEY | ... | ... | ... | Fred. Harford |
| PHILIPS | ... | ... | ... | J. A. O'Rourke |
| MIKE | ... | ... | ... | Sean Connolly |
| MANGAN | ... | ... | ... | Ann Coppinger |
| MRS. DILLON | ... | ... | ... | Helen Molony |
| MRS. PALMER | ... | ... | ... | Nora Desmond |
| JANE CURRAN | ... | ... | ... | Philip Guiry |
| MAJOR SIRR | ... | ... | ... | H. E. Hutchinson |
| JONES | ... | ... | ... | |

OTHER MEN; *Arthur Shields, Edward Reardon, and Jack Dunne*

